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2000**

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Race to recover a crashed B-1B bomber carrying nuclear weapons. Includes a special section on detonation effects. *By Robert Barnes*

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A priest's vision portends that Kalima will rise like a Messiah to bring the Ibo tribe to victory. *By Andrew M. Borelli*

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Challenge

Issue 73

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ABOUT THE COVER
This issue's cover features Jeff Laubenstein's illustration of a Firestarter Antipersonnel Light BattleMech from the *BattleTech* universe. (It's purely speculation, but we've never seen Drew Barrymore and this character in the same place. Hmm...)

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Credits

FROM THE MANAGEMENT By Frank Chadwick

Let's Do Lunch

It's true, kiddies, we've signed a movie deal for **Space: 1889™**. It's also true that most movie deals never produce a finished product. In this case, though, there's a much greater chance of a quality final product appearing because of the people at Anders International we are working with.

For starters, they are all professionals who have worked in film and entertainment for years. Anders International is a fairly new company, but the people who formed it are not strangers to the business.

Second, they share an interesting hobby—gaming. Specifically, roleplaying games. Specifically, **Space: 1889**.

What's really heartening is their enthusiasm for and commitment to the project. First, a commitment to producing a superb product. While cheepie direct-to-video productions are all the rage these days, the people at Anders are holding out for a large-budget theatrical release, with top-of-the-line F/X and a great cast. Second, they are really committed to remaining faithful to the **Space: 1889** universe, and we've been working very closely with them on plot, character, and background to help get every detail right.

More news as it develops.

Say Hello To The New Kid

For years GDW used a variety of free-lance artists for interior illustrations in our games, and that system served us very well. I think almost everyone will agree that we had some of the top free-lance talent working for us, and they produced some great art.

One problem with free-lance interior illustration, however, is controlling the overall look and feel of the product. Different artists have different styles. It's tough for one artist to do all of the art needed in a single product, but it's even tougher matching the various styles of five or six different artists and keeping a coherent look to the product.

Since we wanted to tighten up the family look and feel of our products, we decided to bring a free-lancer in-house on full-time basis, and the lucky winner was Bradley K. McDevitt. Brad came aboard shortly after **Traveller® The New Era** shipped and has done the lion's share of fine art interior illustration in all of the **Traveller** products since then. I love his stuff. Take a bow, Brad.

Can You Say Hubris?

Just the other day, the latest issue of **White Wolf** magazine showed up and in it is an article presenting, with the enthusiastic endorsement of the editors, a profile of **White Wolf** gamers compared to "other gamers." This article sets new highs for self-congratulatory arrogance, even by **White Wolf's** standards (and that, unfortunately, is really saying something).

The article interested me because I'm a gamer and I'm not primarily a **White Wolf** customer, and so I fit in the "other gamer" category or, to quote the article correctly, "Other Gaming Geek (OGG)." I would venture a guess that that applies to most of you reading this editorial right now as well. So what does **White Wolf** think of us? More importantly, what characteristics does **White Wolf** believe that we all share which set us apart from the sort of customer that they imagine they sell to? I will let them speak for themselves. First, how do they imagine their audience?

You might have noticed that there's an undefinable something that sets players of Vampire: The Masquerade apart from other gamers. It's not just that their t-shirts actually fit. Nor is it the way they casually dust their conversation with off-hand references to bands and authors that no one else ever heard of (making you

feel you're no more civilized than a Kalahari bushman). It's not even the hair (oh, such hair!), the earrings or the boots. No, it's an emotional, almost spiritual quality. Silent... amorphous... it stands alone, unchanging. Not knowing its name, I style it "attitude."

Great. Now how about the rest of us Other Gaming Geeks?

Basically, OGGs are adolescents, regardless of chronological age. They usually live with or near their folks, but sometimes marry other OGGs and occasionally even spawn. If forced to find jobs, they usually end up doing something unspeakably mindless and degrading, but a minority make a frighteningly good living as engineers or programmers (all their money goes into computer supplies and games).

Now this was admittedly in their April Fools issue, and the article pokes some good-natured fun at **Vampire** gamers as well. But I don't detect much that is good-natured in the above characterization. Furthermore, I'm getting a little tired of what I call the Rush Limbaugh defense.

What, you ask, is the Rush Limbaugh defense? Simple. First, say any and every outrageous thing that pops into your head, and don't worry about the consequences. (Example: "If the only way we can get women off of juries is to take away their right to vote, then maybe we ought to.") Then, when everybody, including even some of your most ardent supporters, takes offense, just say, "Hey, what's wrong with you people? Can't you take a joke?"

Maybe that's my problem. Maybe I can't take a joke. Or maybe I've heard this same gamer-as-geek joke repeated over and over so many times that it's just not funny anymore. But I think that what really bothers me is this deification of "attitude" without any real concern for substance.

Having been at this business for something over 20 years, and the hobby for even longer—pushing 30 years now—I've had an opportunity to examine thousands of gamers—maybe tens of thousands—up close and personal. Different people confronting the same event will notice different things, and maybe what people notice tells you as much about them as about what they are observing. Here are the things that have struck me as worthy of notice over the years.

I have never once, in nearly 30 years, heard a gamer use the word "nigger." When you think about it, that's astonishing.

I have never once heard a gamer say the word "bitch" with that particular bite to the voice and curl to the lip that is the sign of a deep and heartfelt hostility toward women.

I have seen gamers angry, but have never once seen a gamer's anger turn into physical violence directed against another human being. I have had to break up fist fights, but never between gamers. I have known battered wives, but never one who was married to a gamer.

Do gamers dress well? I couldn't say; I've honestly never paid much attention to that sort of thing. Do they have a firm grasp of style and fashion? Sorry, wouldn't know. Do they have "attitude"? Beats the hell out of me.

But if you ask me if they have character, I will answer, "Absolutely."

If you have character, you don't need attitude, and attitude without character is just form without function, all style and no substance, all sizzle and no steak. It's a really loud voice with nothing much to say.

Say something.

Boy is Our Face Red

Number 1 in a Continuing Series by
Frank 'n' Dave

Umm, some of you loyal TNE players who have purchased and read both *Path of Tears* and *Smash & Grab* may have noticed that it couldn't be DLS *Helios* that was on Isis/Asena, as recounted in S&G. PoT takes care to explain that *Helios* is a member of the vampire fleet at Mitchell, while it was DLS *Brilliant* that misjumped from Meadsk.

So how did this miscarriage of continuity occur?

Beats us, to be honest, because we worked all of this stuff out to make sure that we used *Brilliant* to maintain consistency with *Path of Tears*. When we got the original manuscript, author "Geo" Gelinas had named the ship *Marco Polo*, but we wanted the ship to

fit in with the 12 original traders that we had presented in PoT, and so we sat down to find which of the ships it could have been. After careful study, we determined that *Brilliant* was the logical ship, as her fate was not completely explained, and her misjump would allow her to make it over to Isis. This tied up a few loose ends and allowed the adventure to remain true to Geo's original concept. We were pleased at the elegant solution made possible by our careful advance planning. What could be more perfect, reasonable or well-planned? What could go wrong, I ask you? Well?

But sure as the red on our face, it says *Helios* in clear italicized print. Go figure.

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P.O. Box 1646
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The setting for this adventure is the Black Hills region of South Dakota some time after April of 2001. The PCs are assumed to be working for one of the rival America governments (MilGov or CivGov), though this is not strictly necessary. Referees are encouraged to modify this material to suit their own style as well as that of their PCs.

CRAZY HORSE

A Twilight adventure
by Robert Barnes

During the nuclear attacks on the United States in November and December of 1997, the Strategic Air Command (SAC) implemented its long-established plan to re-deploy its bombers to various surviving bases and airfields, ensuring America's ability to continue the fight (not that it made much difference in the final analysis). Bombers returning from their missions landed at hastily prepared airfields, refueled, re-armed and took off again. Soon, though, there was nothing significant left to bomb, and there were very few functional aircraft left to bomb with.

On December 4, 1997, a lone B-1B bomber carrying several nuclear weapons crashed while en route to Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City, South Dakota. Ellsworth was operating under difficult weather conditions, and most of its radar and other tracking equipment had been damaged by the electromagnetic pulse (EMP) of multiple nuclear detonations in the atmosphere. While making its final approach over the Black Hills, the plane apparently suffered a severe mechanical failure. Radio operators at Ellsworth received a brief mayday from the pilot, which was abruptly cut off (by the crash).

A search effort was begun, but near-blizzard conditions resulted in the crash of two rescue aircraft, and it was called off. As more pressing concerns arose, Ellsworth was soon abandoned by its remaining personnel, who took with them the knowledge of the crash.

It has been more than three years since the nuclear exchange. While the war has largely ground to a halt, America has become divided between several rival governments: the Military Government (MilGov), Civilian Government (CivGov), and reactionary, isolationist New America. A new civil war is brewing. To further complicate matters, the nation is in the grips of a severe drought by the spring of 2001, raising the possibility of famine.

Recently, in the border town of Salinas, Kansas, a marauder claiming to have been a USAF flight controller at Ellsworth during the war was arrested. In a futile attempt to avoid hanging, he bargained information about a crashed bomber "up in the Black Hills—with a load of nukes and everything!" His captors didn't buy his story (nor did they care), but it was noted by agents of both MilGov and CivGov, who soon reported the incident.

Dreading the possibility of an intact nuclear weapon falling into "the wrong hands" (i.e., anyone else's), the MilGov authorities in Colorado Springs quickly assembled a scout team to investigate the story. If the PCs are working for MilGov, they are the ones selected for the mission, code-named "Phoenix." If not, then the referee should generate the necessary NPCs for a special forces team of roughly a dozen men (all Elite NPCs with military weapons and equipment).

Eager to redress the nuclear imbalance between itself and MilGov by acquiring its own weapons, CivGov's CIA chief in Omaha has outfitted a team of investigators as well. If the PCs are working for CivGov, they represent this team. If not, then a team of CIA mercs (trained and equipped similarly to MilGov's team) should be generated.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Whichever side the PCs are on, there should be 10-12 members in their team (the referee should add NPCs or allow PCs to play multiple characters in order to round out the group). One of the PCs (probably the highest ranking) should be designated as the team leader.

Since the PCs will not know about the other group initially, the referee is encouraged to design the members of the opposing team to contrast with the PCs' personalities and abilities. This is a good way to introduce one of a PC's contacts.

The two teams are unaware of each other at the start of the adventure, but their paths will cross at least once. Encounters with the opposing team should

be timed for maximum dramatic effect. Allow the PCs to set the tone of the rivalry. It need not be a violent one. On the other hand, the rivalry could result in a deadly game of cat-and-mouse in the rugged wilds of the Black Hills. Either way, the more colorful and clever the opposing team is, the more challenging and enjoyable it will be for the PCs.

Two other groups that the PCs will have to deal with are New America and the resurgent Sioux Nation. It is even possible that the rival MilGov and CivGov teams may be forced into a temporary alliance due to the activities of one or both of these groups.

NEW AMERICA

Though poorly equipped by comparison to some New American cells, the Black Hills enclave has managed to set itself up rather nicely in the area, presenting a serious threat to the Sioux. A large number of the locals are supporters of New America, and the arrival of a heavily armed group of strangers will not go unnoticed. Should the New Americans find out about the nukes, they will begin actively and aggressively searching for them (and will probably attempt to capture a few members of the PCs' team for interrogation). If the PCs have had past dealings with New America, they may feel a strong

obligation to destroy this cell.

The leader of the Black Hills enclave is Colonel Peter Young. He is only 30 years old, having gained his position when his predecessor was killed in a "tragic" jeep accident. Young is aggressive and ambitious, a staunch supporter of Carl Hughes and his New American philosophy. He runs his cell in a very rigid, militaristic fashion; he has quietly eliminated everyone he perceived as a threat. Young is convinced that New America will triumph in the coming war and that he will naturally rise to the top of the new order when Hughes is gone. The last orders he received from the New American high command were to "neutralize" the militant Sioux Nation and begin expansion into Wyoming. So far, he has been unable to deal with the Sioux, which has become a source of frustration to him. His current plan is to assassinate Chief Soaring Eagle and let the various Sioux factions do his work for him. If he learns of the ALCMs (air-launched cruise missiles), though, they will become his primary concern, overshadowing everything else.

SIUX NATION

The Sioux Nation is currently comprised of a tenuous collection of rival factions united under one banner. The

Detonation Effects

If, for whatever reason, the referee allows one or both of the bombs to detonate, the following effects apply:

Any unprotected human within three miles will be killed quickly and unpleasantly due to the explosion's thermal pulse and/or blast wave (never mind about the lethal dose of radiation). Sadistic referees might want to review films like "Threads" or "The Day After" for more descriptive material. Protected humans within this zone will not be killed outright by the bomb, but may suffer from its secondary effects. "Protection" can be anything from a reinforced bunker to an intervening ridge. The referee should use discretion when deciding how much protection a character can have from a nuclear explosion.

Out to a distance of about five miles, there will be considerable secondary effects. The seismic shock wave will cause severe structural damage to buildings, bridges, etc., while the thermal pulse will ignite dry leaves, paper, etc. and cause a severe "sunburn" to exposed skin. Because of the drought conditions, a firestorm will be generated which will quickly kill anyone unable to escape.

Out to a distance of about 10 miles, there will be minor effects like cracked windows and minor tremors. Even this area will be dangerous because of the firestorm which will rapidly engulf the area.

Since the bombs will be detonated at or near ground level, a crater some 300 meters across will be gouged out of the surrounding soil and rock. The resulting radioactive debris will fall back to earth with deadly effects. Anything within one mile of the crater will receive an immediately fatal dose of radiation, while those within two miles (or within six miles downward) will receive 1200 rads per hour for about eight hours. After eight hours, the dose will fall to 600 rads per hour; after 16 more hours, it will fall to 300 per hour; after 32 more hours, 150 rads, etc.

Anyone with Warhead skill will be able to roughly estimate these effects without a roll. Any military characters with experience in ground combat (infantry, armor artillery, etc.) must make a Difficult: Intelligence check to possess the same information. Of course, everyone knows that nukes are bad news.

leader of the loose confederation is Chief David Soaring Eagle, a 63-year-old doctor. Several of the younger chiefs are pressuring for the reclaiming of the Black Hills, land lost for over a century. Soaring Eagle knows that the Sioux are not yet a match for the US Army and doesn't want to provoke a confrontation. He is hoping that he can bide his time, gaining strength as the white man's world tears itself apart. The presence of New America has made it difficult for Soaring Eagle to control the more militant factions, and he is considering a costly campaign to eradicate the NA strongholds simply as a means of preserving Sioux unity.

THE PHOENIX

Although cut from the Pentagon budget long before the war, the B-1B Phoenix was still present in significant numbers in the SAC arsenal when the war began. The B-1 was capable of carrying an impressive array of weapons for a variety of purposes. The primary reason for the bomber's budgetary demise was the development of air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs), which (arguably) made the B-1 obsolete. Strangely enough, the primary role of the B-1 during the war was to carry ALCMs.

The crashed B-1 had a cluster of eight ALCMs, each with a single B86 200-kiloton nuclear warhead. Despite the crash and the passage of time, two of these warheads are still capable of detonation, making them extremely dangerous.

Unless someone with the appropriate skill (Warhead) is present, there is very little chance of deliberately arming and detonating either bomb. However, the primary use for the bombs (in terms of this scenario, anyway) is to keep the PCs motivated (scared). It is highly recommended that the referee keep these out of the hands of unscrupulous PCs.

BROKEN ARROWS

Each warhead is relatively small once it is removed from the ALCM. They are roughly four feet long, two feet in diameter, and weigh around 250 kilograms, making them difficult to move. The two-centimeter steel casing cannot be penetrated with small arms fire, but heavier weapons or explosives might get through. The casing can be considered to have an AV: 4 for purposes of damage. There is a protected control panel which requires a key (or a Difficult: Lockpick roll) to open. The control panel allows manual arming or disarming of the bomb (assume that only those with

Warhead skill can get past the safeguards, and then only with a Difficult skill roll). Failure in any attempt to arm/disarm the bomb causes the controls to freeze up, requiring a Difficult: Electronics roll to unfreeze. Catastrophic Failure will have one of the following random effects:

Roll	Result
1-2	Controls freeze irretrievably. No further tampering will have any effect.
3-4	Bomb will detonate in 1D100 minutes (may be reversed with later rolls). If this result occurs a second time, bomb detonates.
5	Bomb self-destructs (no nuclear explosion, but 10D6 rads per minutes over burst radius until washed off. Treat explosion as 155mm HE round).
6	Bomb detonates with full effects.

THE LAND

The Black Hills region is very rugged, being mostly forested and mountainous. The average July temperature is 69°F. Roads in the area are often very steep, with frequent tunnels. Some notable areas in or near the Black Hills are described below:

Mount Rushmore: This mammoth sculpture portrays the faces of four American presidents: Washington, Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Lincoln. A visitors' center to the landmark stands nearby. Anyone exploring the site may notice that all the electrical wiring has been removed from the area. The view from the top of the mountain is commanding, and the area is frequently used by both Sioux and New American scouts, though neither group maintains any kind of permanent outpost at the site.

Wind Cave National Park: This is one of the oldest national parks in the United States (since 1903) and covers close to 30,000 acres of prairie and forest. Wind Cave itself is the seventh longest cave in the world, with over 50 miles of formations. The park area is home to buffalo, deer, elk and prairie dogs. About 500 Sioux make their home here presently, including about 60 warriors. The upper levels of the cave are used to store food and other supplies. The Sioux have a variety of small arms for hunting and defense, consisting mostly of hunting rifles and shotguns, but with a small quantity of military and police weapons. The Sioux have close to 100 horses and about half as many pack mules.

Badlands: Millions of years of erosion have carved out an eerie landscape covering about 250,000 acres of western South Dakota. Spires, gorges and buttes dominate this bizarre region, which is home to buffalo, deer and pronghorn antelope. Very few people venture into this area anymore, as it is now heavily patrolled by Sioux warriors. There are rumors of a secret government stockpile located in the region.

Jewel Cave: This is the world's fourth longest cave, with over 80 miles of explored passages. The cave gets its name from the abundance of calcite crystals here, but contains many other unusual formations. Originally, a large elevator carried passengers from the visitor's center to the entrance into the cave, some 290 feet below the surface. The elevator is now powerless, which has been enough to deter any visits to the caverns below. If anyone spends enough time exploring the caves, they may discover a well-preserved stockpile of foodstuffs and seeds, as well as crates of small arms, tools, ammunition and limited quantities of petroleum products (5000 liters of gasoline, 3000 liters of diesel, 1000 liters of motor oil and a number of other lubricants). When the pre-exchange government placed this stockpile, it was well-hidden and protected by several traps (including a particularly nasty one involving a claymore mine and a chemical blood agent gas canister). The small arms in the cache are all of American manufacture, but are of both civilian and military origin. The cache is of immense value to whoever can recover it.

Crazy Horse Mountain: This monument to the culture of the North American Indian was begun in 1948 and was unfinished by the time the war broke out. The 563-foot mountain carving stands partially finished amidst the rusting equipment used in its creation. The head and arm of Crazy Horse are essentially complete, and the rest of the carving is recognizable. Tons of explosives were stored here before New American troops seized them, but a diligent search will turn up about 200 pounds of dynamite they overlooked, still quite usable. The New Americans have defaced parts of the monument with racist graffiti. Neither New America nor the Sioux patrol this area very frequently, which is why neither group has discovered the crashed B-1 or its devastating cargo.

Custer State Park: This 73,000-acre park is home to one of the largest herds of bison in the world, along with deer,

pronghorn antelope, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, elk, wild turkeys and a large pack of burros (brought to the area in the 1920s). Four historic lodges can be found here, all currently in use as basecamps for New American patrols, which are very common in the park. Any intruders caught in the area will be taken to the nearest basecamp for interrogation.

FINDING THE NUKES

The plane crashed into the base of Crazy Horse mountain and was buried by the subsequent rockslide. The only point where the wreckage is clearly visible is from the top of Crazy Horse monument itself. Unless it is spotted from atop Crazy Horse (an Average: Observation task), the plane is unlikely to be found with a visual search, although pieces of debris might be found in the area.

Another way of locating the crash site is by searching with Geiger counters. In their current state of disrepair, the ALCMs leak enough radiation to be noticed by a Geiger counter up to 300 meters away. The concentration of radiation is not harmful for short periods of time, but the absence of plant and animal life nearby should provide the PCs with a clue.

Recovering the warheads will be dan-

gerous work. The rockslide can be dug away from the wreckage, but there is the risk of triggering another slide (referee's discretion). The threat of another slide should be adequate to keep the PCs on their toes; use of explosives should definitely trigger more slides. Those who possess Mining Engineer skill can determine a safe way to excavate the bombs (Average: Mining Engineer). Use of explosives should increase the chances of either New American or Sioux patrols in the area.

The player characters may choose to hide the bombs and call in reinforcements before attempting to move them any great distance. This is probably a wise move and could develop into an adventure in its own right. If the PCs have already explored the area, they should have several options for hiding the bombs. Ω



Nigeria, April 10, 2000: Sure is hot around here. Isn't so bad during the off-hours, but in the bush, it's murder. Your hair's always pasted to your head, and sweat's always stinging your eyes. Not to mention the stink of rot, the flies, and the bodies everywhere.

Still, I guess it could be worse. Pay's good, supply is all-you-can-eat ammo, and by the end of the month, we'll be on an Osprey back to Capetown. I hope.

A Merc adventure by Andrew Borelli

The PCs are approached by a level III patron representing a large mining firm (the patron will not reveal who) based in Capetown with holdings all over Africa. The contract is for a rescue mission in Nigeria for the Biafran Army. Pay is \$10,000 per team member, and the patron will provide up to \$25,000 in equipment. However, these amounts are nonnegotiable, and the team members must provide their own personal weapons.

MISSION BRIEFING

Four years ago, during the Nigeria/Biafra civil war, a man named Royunda Kalima led a large contingent of the Catholic Ibo tribes against the largely Muslim Nigerian Army. The rebels fared well, fending off two major attacks by Nigerian armor, while launching a partially successful attack against the Nigerian front. When the attack fell apart, Kalima still managed to pull his forces together in good order and maintain a destructive guerrilla campaign against the Nigerians for seven months. Only after being cornered and cut off completely was Kalima's group forced to surrender.

Kalima was presumed killed by the Nigerians. Actually, Kalima managed to escape to Zaire and was intercepted by the Zaire Army. The government there agreed to hold Kalima for their Nigerian allies indefinitely in exchange for supplies to fight against Angola. With the news of Kalima's "death," the Ibo tribe quickly lost heart and has had its back to the wall since.

Unfortunately, a native priest of the Ibo tribes has had a disturbing vision in the night: a vision that Kalima is alive, and that like a Messiah he will soon rise to bring the Ibo tribe to victory.

Nigeria wants Kalima back from Zaire to secretly execute him before the rumors of his "resurrection" run wild and cause new uprisings. Zaire so far refuses to give him back, but

Nigeria has offered three diamond mines (which officially belong to the patron's firm) to Zaire in return for Kalima's release. Zaire has agreed.

The PCs are assigned to rescue Kalima from his prison in Zaire and deliver him to the Biafran capital of Malarani, where company men will be waiting to debrief the team. With Kalima in charge of Biafran forces again, the rebels stand an excellent chance of defeating Nigeria—and the patron firm will retain ownership of its diamond mines. Kalima must be returned unharmed or payment will be forfeited.

APPROACH

The team will take off from an airstrip outside Capetown in South Africa at 1800 hours and be brought via Cessna to a grassland area 10 miles from the prison camp. The trip will take six hours.

The player characters will parachute in the cover of darkness from 10,000 feet and dispose of the 'chutes on landing at LZ New York. From there, they will proceed three miles northwest to the camp. There is a single river to cross, as well as a heavy jungle area. It will be 85 degrees and extremely moist, so fatigue will be doubled by heavy exertion activity. The cover of the jungle will ensure condition 2 lighting at all times. There are no suitable roads on the approach to the encampment except for a single dirt road to the west running up from the southwest, but this is constantly jammed with vehicles headed for the Angolan front.

RETRIEVAL

The PCs must travel eight miles northeast to LZ Chicago, where a UH-1 Huey will meet them at 0330 hours. Once on the chopper, the team will be brought to Malarani and debriefed. The LZ must be marked with two red flares at either end, or the Huey will not set down. If the Huey spots no flares by 0340, it will leave.

MAPS

On the area map, three locations are marked: the prison camp, LZ New York, where the team will jump, and LZ Chicago, where the team must meet the extraction chopper. Much of the map is jungle—this is a moderately thick, hot rain forest area. The plains are dried grasslands.

On the prison camp map are various locations:

Sentry Posts: Each contains a single Veteran soldier.

Guard Towers: Each contains one Experienced soldier armed with an AKR. Each soldier also mans a Vz-59 machinegun and slowly pans a spotlight around the perimeter of the camp at 10-minute intervals.

Headquarters: This is an HQ building as seen many times before. The camp commanding officer sleeps here, and the administrative offices are located here as well. Use the map from **Merc: 2000**, page 74, to represent this place. The building is occupied by five to eight Veteran officers armed with pistols and 10 Veteran guards armed with various Eastern bloc rifles and SMGs.

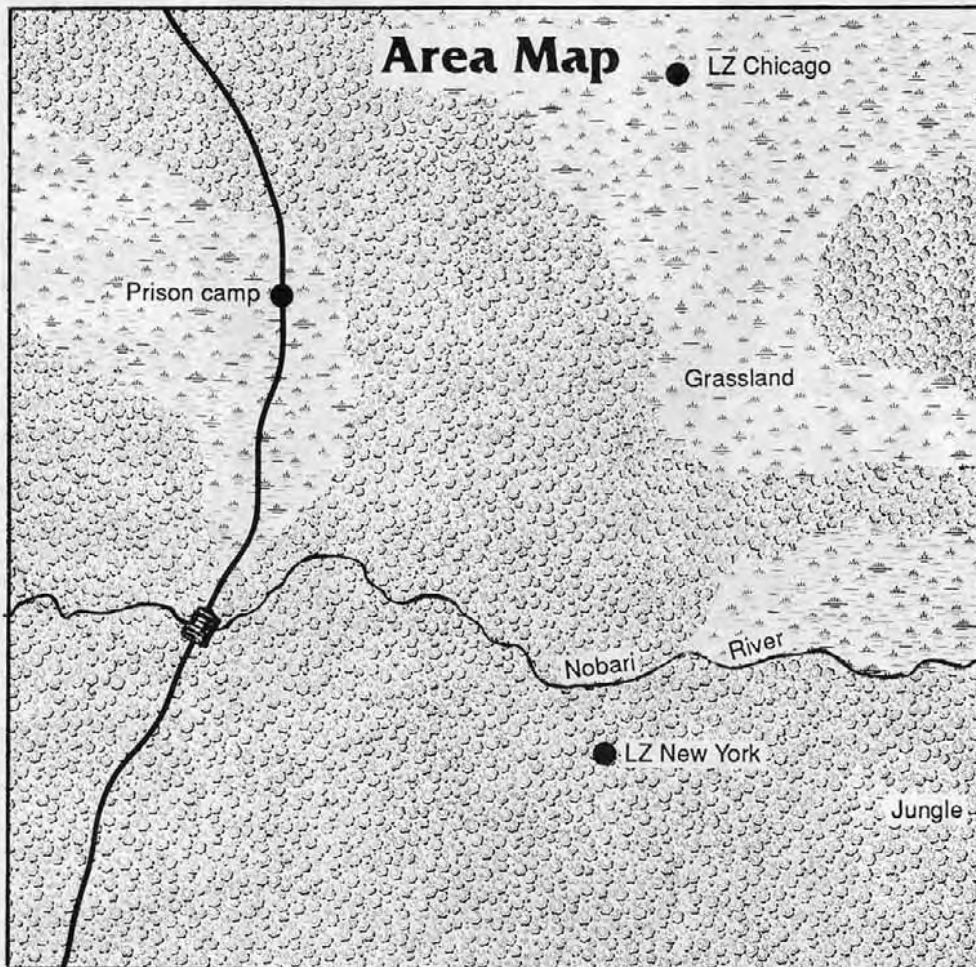
Prison Bloc A: This is where the prisoners are actually held. Use the police station map from **Twilight**, with some changes: The briefing room and the detectives' desks are not there. Instead, there are more holding cells filled with political prisoners and Angolan POWs. The waiting room is now a delousing and processing area, while the lineup room is an area where prisoners are brought before firing squads. In the basement, the locker rooms are more interrogation rooms. This building is occupied by 15 Experienced and 15 Veteran troops armed with Soviet rifles and SMGs. There is also an officer on duty at the desk. There are 20 cells containing prisoners in squalid conditions. Royunda Kalima is not in this building.

Prison Bloc B: The same as Prison Bloc A, except that Royunda Kalima is in this building. He may be found in the holding cell directly across from the toilets. He is suffering from malnutrition and has many bruises from multiple beatings, but is otherwise unharmed.

Officers' Quarters: These are the officers' quarters, as seen in **Merc: 2000**, page 73. The change here is that locations A-D are now the enlisted and officers' mess hall. There are no up-down staircases. Three officers will be in their quarters, and many of the troops will be eating when the team arrives.

Barracks 1: These are troop bar-





racks, as seen in **Merc: 2000**, page 75. There are sleeping quarters for 60 men, with mosquito nets over each bed. About half the troops will be sleeping in the building at the time of the attack. The troops are Experienced and armed with assault rifles.

Barracks 2: This is the same as the regular barracks, except these are Veteran troops. Forty of them will be here when the team reaches the camp, most of them asleep.

RUNNING THE SCENARIO

The team will probably land without a hitch, but making it through the jungle should be an adventure in itself. You may want to roll some animal encounters for effect (see the African animal encounter table in **Twilight: 2000**, Version 2.2, page 163) and perhaps a couple of encounters with groups of people. Zaire is still at war with Angola, and the fighting has left a toll on the countryside, so the team is likely to encounter refugees, wrecked equipment, and deserted villages, especially near LZ New York.

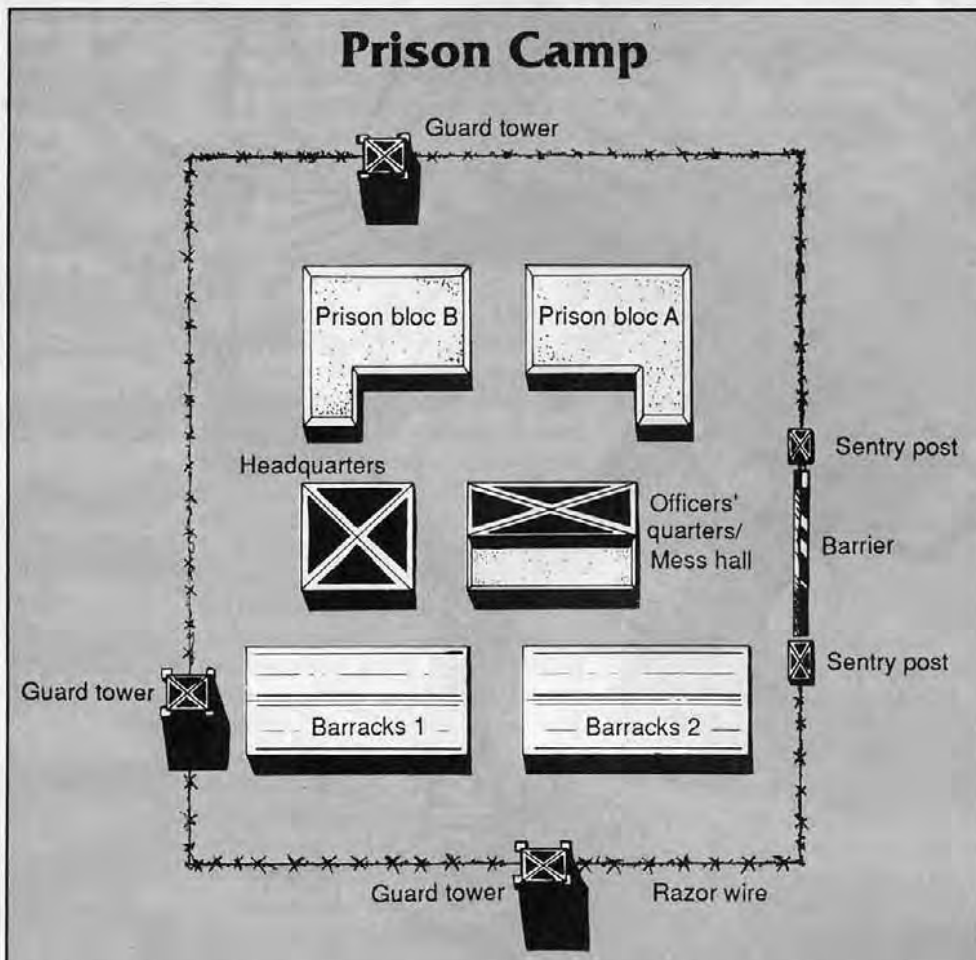
The enemy runs random patrols in a one-mile circumference around the camp, and it is possible to encounter one. Inside the camp, the bulk of the troops will be asleep, but some will be awake, and there is an especially large group (around 25) in the mess hall. Any serious noise (full auto fire, explosions, yells) will alert the entire camp.

Once the enemy is alerted, it will take the Veteran troops three to five minutes to get assembled, and Experienced troops four to seven minutes to assemble. Veteran troops not asleep will assemble in one minute, Experienced troops in two. Note that the team has a free hand in dispatching this bunch and can deal with them any way they like, as long as Kalima is not harmed.

As the troops assemble, they will organize into Soviet-style rifle squads, except there is no RPG gunner or machinegunners. The RPG man now carries an RPK squad automatic, and the machinegunners carry Striker automatic shotguns. The rest of the squad carries Soviet assault rifles and SMGs. All the men have Vz-52 sidearms. There is no driver, either—instead, this is another gunner with an RPK. If a full-scale battle begins, the team will probably find it impossible to defeat the entire camp, and rescuing Kalima may well become impossible. Thus, it is best if the team eliminates as many troops as possible covertly before the shooting begins.

Escaping to LZ Chicago should pro-

Continued on page 15.



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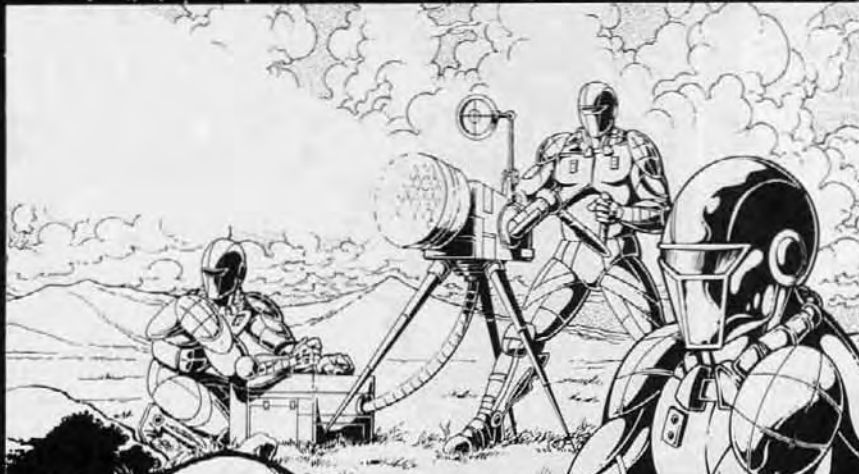
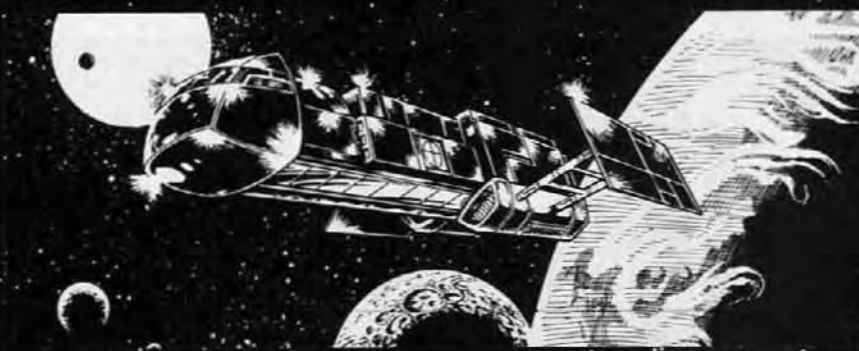
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GAME DESIGNERS' WORKSHOP

Continued from page 12.

vide no real challenges, unless an extensive battle broke out beforehand. If so, it is likely that the team will be pursued the entire way or encounter heavily armed patrols heading toward the camp. If the team made it out effortlessly, however, don't hesitate to torture them by throwing in some natural, animal or group encounter to impede their progress.

If returned safely to his people, both Kalima and the patron will be very pleased.

The team has now made a couple of friends in this region who may come in handy in the future (and if Nigeria is ever defeated, the team will have a friendly independent nation in the middle of Africa they can travel to).

VARIATIONS

After the attack on the camp is under way, the team discovers that Kalima has been executed already, or has been moved to another camp. Either way, there's no way to recover him now, and the PCs will have a lot of explaining to do to the patron (the Biafran Army won't be too happy either).

Or, after the player characters have trashed the camp and escaped with Kalima, the patron company makes a new deal with Nigeria, so that the mines are retained without Kalima's rescue. The team only discovers this after the

chopper never appears at LZ Chicago or passes them by there.

Or maybe the team's just a little too well equipped? See what they can do if the camp has some armored vehicles at its disposal. If they mop up that group, have a "welcoming party" waiting for them at LZ Chicago, complete with a T-62 tank.

Finally, if you feel the odds are too stacked in either direction, feel free to alter the number of troops defending the camp and its outskirts.

ROYUNDA KALIMA

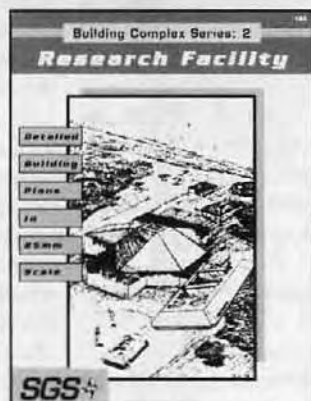
Nationality: Ibo Tribe, Nigeria
Gender: M
Age: 40
Service: Biafran Rebel Army
Weight: 89 kg
Throw: 20
Initiative: 5
Rank: Colonel
Load: 20
STR: 5
Unarmed Martial Arts: 3
Armed Martial Arts: 3
Mechanic: 1
Small Arms (Pistol): 4
Small Arms (Rifle): 3
Thrown Weapon: 1
EDU: 6
CON: 5
Riding: 1
Swimming: 1

CHA: 9
Ibo: 10
English: 3
Leadership: 5
Persuasion: 2
AGL: 7
INT: 7
Farming: 5
Tracking: 2
Survival: 1

Royunda Kalima was a farmer's son in the Catholic Ibo tribelands of south-east Nigeria. As government oppression grew, more and more of Kalima's people went off to fight; many never returned. Kalima showed a propensity for leadership and a sharp mind, and although not physically strong, he made the decision at age 22 to join the rebel Biafran Army.

After many battles, during which Kalima served impressively, promotion began to come quickly. Indeed, Kalima took so well to the credo of the rebellion that he was quickly respected throughout the entire movement, until by age 36 he had reached the rank of colonel. Under Kalima, the Biafran Army thrived. It was only bad luck and unfortunate timing that led to Kalima's imprisonment. If Kalima is to return to the Ibos, chances are good that victory—or at least a more even stalemate—will soon follow. Ω

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AD11

NUGGETS

By
**James
Maliszewski**

Random nuggets and patron encounters have long been a part of playing both **Traveller** and **MegaTraveller**. With the continuance of the **Traveller** storyline in **Traveller: The New Era**, there is no reason why these useful referee tools should not continue as well. Random nuggets allow the referee great flexibility and allow him to flesh out a campaign with interesting side adventures. The following are six random nuggets written especially for the **New Era** setting. All are generic enough to work equally well in **Star Viking**, **Regency**, or pocket empire campaigns.



Merchant Princess

Required Skills: Starship skills.

Required Equipment: Starship.

The PCs are approached by a woman who identifies herself as the owner of a fleet of merchant vessels. While her fleet is small (three old starships) and

trade is scarce on the frontiers, she does enough business to keep herself and her employees working. Of late, her successes in opening trade routes to previously uncontacted worlds have brought her to the attention of the government. Several government officials have expressed an interest in backing her fleet as a means of ensuring that trade once more freely flows between the worlds of charted space.

Unfortunately, she has a problem. One of her ships disappeared while making a routine trade run to a newly contacted world. Her other employees are frightened, and will not go and investigate themselves. The government has begun to fear that maybe she is not worth supporting. After all, if she is the sort to lose something as valuable as a merchant ship, perhaps they should look elsewhere.

The merchant knows that the time is right to reopen the trade routes and that she is just the woman to do it. She wants to hire the PCs and their starship to find out what happened to her missing vessel. She is willing to pay them now in high-tech items worth Cr100,000, including weapons and fuel for their ship. In addition, she promises a 10% cut of whatever money she gets from the government when it supports her in her endeavors.

There are six possible variations to this scenario.

1. The merchant is telling the truth as she knows it. Her missing vessel was attacked while en route to its destination by raiders. Its cargo was stolen and its crew killed. The vessel was taken by the raiders and added to their fleet. The PCs may encounter her ship as part of a raider attack on their ship. If they can disable her vessel and defeat the raiders now crewing it, the PCs will be able to recover the ship.

2. The woman is telling the truth as she knows it. Her missing vessel experienced a jump drive failure and set down on a nearby world for repairs.

Unfortunately, the world on which it set down was inhabited by xenophobes who have either captured or killed the crew. The PCs will have to discover the planet and free surviving crewmembers if they are to recover the ship.

3. She is telling the truth as she knows it. Her missing vessel encountered another starship infected by the Virus and was either destroyed or infected with the Virus itself. If the ship was infected, the PCs will have to board the now-infected vessel and do whatever they can to rid its computers of the Virus before they can recover it. If it was destroyed, the PCs may encounter the vessel that destroyed her ship, and it may try to destroy them as well.

4. She is partially telling the truth. While her ship has disappeared, she has some idea what happened to it. She has been paying protection money to a local raider band in return for safe passage through the Wilds. Lately, she has not paid her bribe, and the raiders have retaliated. Now, she wants to use the PCs to get back her starship without having to pay the raiders. The rest of her story is true.

5. She is partially telling the truth. Her ship really has disappeared unexpectedly, but her concern has nothing to do with a potential government contract. The missing vessel was carrying secret plans recovered from an old Imperial Navy weapons facility. She figures that the plans would be worth a fortune to any interested party. She wants the PCs to recover the ship so that she can regain the plans. The rest of her story is true.

6. She is lying. She is neither a merchant nor has she lost a ship. In actuality, she is an agent of a local raider band. She is trying to trick the PCs into traveling into the Wilds so that her fellow raiders can attack them and steal their ship. Should the PCs survive her trap and capture her, she is a wanted woman for whom the government would pay Cr50,000 in reward.

Local Leader

Required Skills: Weapons skills, vehicle skills, Stealth.

Required Equipment: Weapons, ground grav vehicle.

The PCs have set down on a previously uncontacted world on the edges of civilized space. After spending some time with the natives, they are introduced to a local leader who is greatly impressed with them. Not only does he express an interest in opening trade relations with the PCs' home government, but he is genuinely interested in them personally and in hearing stories of the PCs' travels and exploits. His ancestors, too, travelled the stars, and he longs for that kind of life for his own people.

Yet before that can happen, circumstances on this world must change. A great problem exists on this world that must be eliminated before there can be any true hope of returning to the best aspects of the old ways before the Collapse. The leader asks the PCs if they might be interested in helping him put an end to this problem. After all, they are experienced interstellar travellers.

There are six possible variations to this scenario.

1. The planet is divided among a large number of petty lords. The leader the PCs have met is but one among them. Before trade is possible with this world, the people must be united under one leader. Or, at the very least, the various lords must stop fighting amongst themselves. Through a combination of diplomacy and military might, the PCs must impress the lords of this world that warfare between them is illogical and foolish.

2. As in 1, but the leader the PCs have met leads a coalition of lords who wish to defeat their rivals solely through military means. The leader wishes the PCs to lend military aid to his faction and to engage in espionage/reconnaissance missions. He explains to the PCs that his faction alone wishes to open relations with off-worlders. His rivals are violent xenophobes who hate all off-worlders.

3. As in 2, but the leader the PCs have met is the leader of the xenophobic coalition. He, of course, does not explain this to the PCs immediately. In fact, he says just the opposite. He wishes to use off-worlders like the PCs for his faction's benefit at the expense of his opponents. Should the PCs help him to succeed, he will try to kill them after the completion of their work on his world.

4. The planet is terrorized by a local



robotics factory which was infected by the Virus previous to the Collapse. The mainframe computer of the factory believes itself to be a god and uses its robotic minions to attack the local humans. The computer believes that only silicon-based life deserves to live and that all other life is pure evil. There is no negotiating with the computer; it must be destroyed, or it will destroy all human life on this world.

5. As in 4, but the computer believes that all humans should serve it. The computer only sends robots to attack humans when they do not obey its "divine commands." The humans wish to be freed from involuntary servitude to the computer. The computer is not completely insane and may be negotiated with. Violence is not the only answer in this situation.

6. The planet is extremely geologically unstable. Based on legends from the Last Imperium, the locals believe that all off-worlders have the ability to stop the recurring earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Naturally, the PCs cannot do so. The locals are in no immediate danger. Records show that this world has always been unstable. There is nothing for the PCs to do but try to convince the locals that this is indeed the case. They may also want to open trade relations with this world once they have explained the truth about themselves and the Last Imperium.

Plague World

Required Skills: Persuasion, Bargain, Act/Bluff, medical and scientific skills.

Required Equipment: Medical supplies.

The PCs have set down on a previously uncontacted world. Upon meeting the locals, they are informed that this world was red-zoned under the Last Imperium because of a plague. The plague is deadly, and there is no known cure. Symptoms, which may be set in as soon as 24 hours after infection or decades later, include dizziness and hallucinations. Finally, the victim lapses into fever and slowly dehydrates, bringing on death.

The locals tell the PCs that they must remain on this world. Were they to leave, they risk spreading the disease throughout Charted Space. They must become accustomed to life on this world because this is where they must remain for the rest of their lives. If they have any sense of duty toward their fellow sophonts, they must never leave.

There are six possible variations to this scenario.

1. All that the locals have said is true, as far as they know. The disease was indeed incurable at the time the red zone was put into effect. In the decades since then, the disease has been cured. If the PCs leave the world and head back to a civilized region of space, they can be cured, as can all of the planet's inhabitants.

2. All that the locals have said is true, as far as they know. The disease is incurable, but it is not as contagious as initially believed. Because of this, coupled with the fact the locals are the descendants of the original victims, the plague has in fact died out on this world. No one is actually infected, as a routine medical scan will reveal. The PCs and the locals may all leave the planet.

3. All that the locals have said is true. The disease is deadly and highly contagious. Fortunately, there is an old Imperial medical research station on this planet's surface. The researchers there discovered a cure on the eve of the Collapse. With the release of the Virus, their work stopped, and the cure was never administered. If the PCs can find the research station, they can use the cure to save themselves and the locals.

4. As in 3, but the research station's mainframe computer was infected by the Virus and did not self-destruct. Now, the computer is a malevolent entity that will tolerate no living creatures other than itself. To obtain the cure, the PCs must defeat the computer and its automated defense systems.

5. The planet is actually a former prison world. These descendants of the original prisoners are mostly sociopathic types with little in the way of human qualities. Yet they are cunning and want to leave their world. They are trying to trick the PCs long enough to kill them and steal their starship. Then, they will leave their world and wreak havoc on others.

6. The planet is actually a former insane asylum. These descendants of the original inmates believe, as their ancestors did, that they are infected with a deadly disease. In point of fact, there never was any disease. They share a delusion that they acquired from their ancestors. Few of the current inhabitants are themselves insane, just misinformed. They and the PCs may leave this world with no ill effects.

Government Official

Required Skills: Stealth, Act/Bluff, Computer Use.

Required Equipment: None.

The player characters are approached by a minor official in the local government. He explains that he is conducting an internal affairs review of personnel in the bureau which handles off-world trade. There is good reason to suspect that there is something questionable going on in the work of one of his underlings. He suspects that this person may be involved in illegal dealings, and he needs to hire someone to investigate.

He will hire the PCs for Cr25,000 to perform this service. He wants the PCs to acquire irrefutable evidence that his underling is engaged in shady operations. If indeed she is not, he wants the PCs to supply him with information that will exonerate her of the suspected wrong-doing. Secrecy is of the utmost importance; she must never know she is under investigation lest internal affairs never find out the truth.

There are six possible variations to this scenario.

1. All is as stated. The underling is involved with a local criminal organization in smuggling stolen pieces of old Imperial high technology through customs. The underling is being paid handsomely for this service. Proof of this operation could send her and her employers to prison for a very long time.

2. As in 1, but the underling is involved in supplying local raiders with the itineraries of merchant vessels leaving this world. The raiders use the information to plunder the merchant ships and steal their cargoes. This is a very serious crime and one for which the penalty is likely to be grave.

3. As in 1, but the underling is simply taking bribes from local merchants to avoid costly tariffs and duty fees. This is still a crime, but there are many other officials who do worse. Even so, the PCs should report this to their employer.

4. The PCs' employer is lying. The "underling" is actually a superior of his whom he wishes to place under suspicion for a crime. By doing this, he hopes to gain advantage and possibly a promotion.

5. As in 4, but the "underling" is currently investigating the PCs' employer for improprieties. Should the PCs discover this and reveal it to their employer, he will then know he is under investigation and try to escape before he can be prosecuted. He will not pay the PCs, but neither will he harm them.

6. All is as stated, as far as the official knows. In truth, the underling is not even human. She is a humanoid robot under the control of a computer infected by

the Virus. This computer is located worlds away and is sending out minions to select worlds for it to conquer. The underling has been using its position on this world to bring others of its kind here as part of advance invasion force.

Religious Figure

Required Skills: Weapons skills.

Required Equipment: Weapons.

The PCs encounter a religious figure who wishes to hire them. He explains that his faith is highly important on this world and that it helped the planet to survive the years since the Collapse. His religion is respected by almost all of the inhabitants of this world because of the power it wields and responsible manner in which it wields that power.

At the same time, the power wielded by the religion is just what some of the inhabitants of this world covet. They know well that to control the local faith is to control the planet. This is why certain enemies of the religion have decided to act against it in a manner that is most heinous. The heir to the leadership of the religion, a teenage boy, has been kidnapped and threatened with death. Since the local religion believes that this boy is the reincarnation of the faith's founding prophet, his survival is of the utmost importance.

The religious figure wishes to hire the PCs to rescue the young boy. In return, he will pay them Cr25,000 in high-tech items. The PCs must succeed since the boy cannot be allowed to be harmed. If nothing is done, the religious leaders will be forced to give in to the kidnappers and anything they ask for. This must not happen.

There are six possible variations to this scenario.

1. All is as stated. The boy is being held by a group of industrialists and corporate types who wish to gain control of the planet's resources. They have a mountain stronghold protected by multiple guards armed with high-tech equipment.

2. As in 1, but the boy is being held by agents of a raider band operating near this system. They wish to blackmail the religious leaders who have tried so hard to eradicate their depredations. If the raiders are thwarted, their fellows in space will step up their raids in retaliation, leading to perhaps another PC mission.

3. As in 1, but the boy is being held by a splinter sect of the local faith. They are zealots who wish their version of the religion to become the dominant one. They are completely untrustworthy and

will kill the boy if they feel there is no hope of escape.

4. As in 1, but the boy is being held by agents of the nearest pocket empire government who are seeking to expand their influence on this world. The local religion has opposed their overtures in the past, and the pocket empire is now desperate. They see this as a last-ditch effort to force concessions from the ruling faith. The PCs could negotiate with them, but the religious leaders are adamant about others not interfering with their world.

5. The religious leader is lying. The boy being held is his own son. He was taken captive because his father is guilty of serious crimes against the populace of the planet. The local religion hopes that, by taking his son captive, he might surrender himself and stand trial for his crimes. The boy is in no danger, but his father wants him back so that he will not have to give himself up.

6. The leader is lying. He is the leader of a schismatic sect that wants to gain dominance on this world. He figures that kidnapping the heir is the perfect means by which he can gain the upper hand over the dominant sect.

Scientist

Required Skills: Starship skills, scientific skills.

Required Equipment: Starship.

The PCs are met by a scientist and her entourage. They are interested in hiring the PCs' starship for an expedition out into the Wilds. Few starships will venture there on missions of a scientific nature, and the local government cannot afford to offer any assistance at the moment. She asks if the PCs might be willing to help her.

All that she asks is passage for herself and her six colleagues to a number of worlds in this subsector. She claims that these worlds all have important scientific value. She will pay the PCs Cr100,000 in gold and/or high-tech items. In addition, she promises to get them to work with other scientists on this world.

There are six possible variations to this scenario.

1. The scientist is looking for extant old Imperial Navy bases on the worlds of the subsector. She wants to know if any are serviceable enough to be refitted and used again. If she finds any that are serviceable, she will inform the PCs of this and promise to give them a cut of the money she will receive from the government from this find.

2. The scientist is looking for worlds

where the Virus still exists and dominates life. She will not explain this to the PCs immediately since she fears their reaction. In particular, she is seeking out a world rumored to be governed by a Virus-infected meson cannon defense computer. If this rumor is true, the computer is malevolent and hateful of all nonsilicon life.

3. The scientist is looking for evidence of the Droyne surviving on any of the nearby worlds. Fragmentary evidence from the Last Imperium suggests that the Droyne were skilled in psionics and the making of starships. If any still survive nearby, they could be powerful allies.

4. The scientist is looking for an old Imperial research station that she believes holds powerful technology used in the last days of the Final War. If this is true, she hopes to recover the technology and give it to her government.

5. As in 4, but the scientist is a complete mercenary. She wishes to sell the technology to the highest bidder. Because the PCs know her secret, she and her colleagues will try to kill them once the technology is uncovered.

6. The scientist is lying. She and her colleague need a ship of their own and will try to steal the PCs' ship from them. At an opportune time (perhaps during jump), they will attack and seek to gain control of the starship. They are desperate people who will fight to the death rather than be defeated. Ω



STRANGE LIGHTS OVER HOKUM

A Traveller adventure by Michael R. Mikes

In this adventure, a culture—steeped in stories not unlike those of Buck Rogers, Flash Gordon, and H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds*—meets Hivers and Star Vikings. Hivers have naively landed at the rural town of Hokum, panicking the residents. Citizen volunteers cut the aliens off from returning to their ship. The player characters must save the Hivers before the "space monsters" are hunted down and killed.

"Strange Lights" may be played by a group of human adventurers, either from the Reformation Coalition or a pocket empire. No particular skills, equipment, or weapons are required. A serious fire fight is not likely to occur as the mood of the adventure is light and emphasizes character interaction.

The adventure takes place on a world in one of the rim-trailing sectors of the former Third Imperium, or possibly the Solomani Confederation. Code ranges for a world suitable as the setting are tech level 4-6, population 5-8, atmosphere 4-9, starport C-X, and hydrosphere 3-9. If no such world in your campaign area fits these ranges, invent a secondary world within an existing star system.

The example used here is Pradock (2711/Old Expanses E567742-5 Ag RI).

PRADOCK

Much of Pradock resembles the rural United States during the early 20th century. Although the people are fiercely patriotic, they have little or no current knowledge of neighboring worlds.

Almost 70 years ago, Pradock revolted against its mother world, Warner (2611/Old Expanses). Pradock won, but the history books give little credit to the simultaneous disappearance of interstellar traffic. The Armistice is the world's most important holiday, celebrated with parades and fireworks.

Pradock enthusiastically welcomed the return of star travellers. For even these visitors, though, space was still unknown except for a handful of worlds. In the absence of real information, Pradock's entertainment industry soon filled the interstellar voids with malign

aliens, wicked emperors, monsters, and heroes. Space adventures became so popular in movie serials, radioplays, and comic books that there is often no distinction between fact and fiction.

In the process, the media has unintentionally fostered the rigid belief that all aliens are scheming villains who wish only ill for humanity.

STARPORT

The adventure opens with the player characters at the starport (central airport). The port director, Maggie Luukar, has received several calls from the town of Hokum insisting she send someone to investigate sightings of "strange lights in the sky." Residents have not called the provincial authorities since rural townships mistrust them.

Understaffed, the port director will appeal to the adventurers for help. She has no resources to hire them, but will cajole the otherwise idle group with fee waivers, bar chits, or other favors. The trip takes a day or two by surface, but only an hour by direct flight. The port can provide an aircraft or grav vehicle, depending on the characters' skills.

The player characters will have two basic objectives. The first is to resolve the mystery of who or what landed at Hokum without rousing a panic. The referee can arrange the adventure to milk this as a deep mystery, or make it a rather simple task.

Once the adventurers learn the visitors are Hivers and better understand the situation, they should next somehow find the aliens and return them safely to their ship. If the player characters do not take the initiative, the starport director will encourage them to do so, suggesting the Hivers will probably offer a reward. They can communicate with the director by radio if not by telephone.

THE SITUATION

The Hivers aboard the trade ship *Vierpix* are not from nests assisting the Reformation Coalition. But they did pass through the RC on their way to exploring the Imperial Wilds. While there, they met a con artist named Jack Straw who sold them numerous unnecessary licenses

and waivers in the guise of a high-placed officer of trades.

As a joke, Jack even sold the aliens a cargo of vimin (wool) at an extremely low rate "for promotional reasons." All they had to do was go by way of Pradock, land at his hometown of Hokum, and present the bill of sale.

He never expected them to get that far before catching on. It was just a delight to imagine the terror real aliens would cause if they landed there. Beyond his expectations, that was precisely what the Hivers did—they descended one night on the boring rural community Jack detested since childhood.

Soon after local dusk, *Vierpix* circled the town at various altitudes and eventually settled at a school yard. Most of the crew left the ship, and soon found a man, Carl Mueller, who was rooting through garbage cans. He led them to Steady's Bar where a town gathering was taking place about the sightings overhead.

The aliens were aware there was tension in the room as they made their introductions, but did not recognize its intensity. When they stated to the mayor, "We have come for your vimin," the Hivers were not prepared for the sudden eruption. Women screamed. Men shouted. People kicked, gouged, hacked, and thumped on the aliens till they escaped through the door.

In the chase, the Hivers managed to evade the mobs, but found themselves cut off from their ship. Much of their equipment was damaged or ruined for being used as shields.

While many of the locals continued the search for the "space monsters," others attacked the alien ship. The one Hiver still aboard was so fascinated listening to Pradock's absurd radio plays, it was not aware of activity outside until too late. Volunteers placed most of the explosives the town had against the ship and set them off. The damage was only superficial, but knocked out ship communications and obscured hull markings.

As the player characters arrive, the Hivers are still being hunted and are separated. They have no safe way back to the *Vierpix*.



INVESTIGATION

When the adventurers arrive, the inhabitants of Hokum will treat them as space hero celebrities. People will want to buy them drinks and give them gifts (pies, poultry, etc.). Young women will admire them. Children will incessantly paw them and ask questions. This will go on even as they investigate.

The first task of the player characters is to learn what happened, which will be seriously hampered by distorted and conflicting stories. People will disagree about exactly when they saw the ship go by and its direction, giving rise to concerns there may be more ships or possibly a whole invasion force.

They will also disagree in the description of the aliens. One will describe them as monsters with fangs and tentacles. Another will picture them as plant people. Another will liken them to giant spiders. Fortunately, one of the aliens lost a tentacle during the clash at the bar. It was taken to the town doctor who also has bits of the aliens' equipment.

Stories of the incident at Steady's Bar will be consistent in one point—all versions will agree that the aliens have come for Hokum's women. As absurd as it might sound to the player characters, everyone involved will insist on this.

Witnesses will recount that one of the aliens aimed a strange contraption at Anna Bel Longwood, the town's Armistice Queen. The device made an "mmm" sound, changing in pitch, as the creature directed it up and down her length. Then the leader said, "We've come for your women." Obviously, the aliens needed the machine to help them select the best women for their unspeakable purposes, or so the townsfolk believe.

In fact, the sensor was nothing more than a sniffer programmed to detect the quality of woolen fabrics. Anna Bel was wearing a locally made dress of woven vimin.

HIVER SHIP

The residents will take the group to the alien ship which sits near the edge of a ball field. Bathed in the lights of the strange craft, fire engines and people form an arc a little more than 50 meters from the ship. Beyond the school property, the field drops off into a wooded area. Lights from armed searchers occasionally glimmer through the foliage.

The glare of many ship lights makes distinguishing details about the craft difficult. Hull markings are especially hard to see, even in daylight, because of soot and dust from the explosion. The class of the vessel resembles nothing in the adventurers' records.

One Hiver is still aboard, named Qatat. Since the explosion, it has kept a vigil to

resist anyone approaching the craft except its awaited shipmates. Qatat can do things such as vent tranquilizing gas to the outside from the anti-hijack system, electrically charge the hull, use the gravity grids to knock those under the ship from off their feet, or 'microwave' them with the active sensors.

The adventurers can potentially attach a communication cable to an antenna stub. The residents will protest the action strenuously since they see no point in listening to alien persuasion. They want the creatures destroyed. But if the group does establish a link, Qatat will explain to the adventurers their situation through a translator and ask for help.

Hokum's mechanics are restoring a large artillery gun, intending to use it to breach a view port of the ship. They need not succeed until late in the adventure, if at all. But this complicates matters by putting Qatat in danger as well.

If the adventurers manage to board the Hiver ship, Qatat will surrender and appeal for help rather than put up a fight. If, however, the group enters with local residents, let Qatat incapacitate the boarders instead. Being an alien ship, the referee may freely invent exotic features to assure the group's capture. For instance, sonic stunners might be installed in the corridors. This way, Qatat can initially deal with the adventurers individually and out of hearing of any residents.

Vierpax is a 400-ton Hiver trader. It has jump-2 and 1G acceleration, and is armed with two laser turrets.

THE HEROES FALL

The people of Hokum will eagerly rally to the 'heroes' for leadership in this crisis. But, expectations of the adventurers are high. They can easily fall from their lofty positions. For instance, if the characters fail to take action or decide to adopt a wait-and-see policy, people will quickly turn impatient. Other pitfalls are causing a panic, being caught in an unlawful or immoral act, calling provincial authorities, or making a serious command error.

To help topple the player characters, carefully review the key personalities later in the article and devise encounters that could trap them or at least present precarious roleplaying situations. Learning to preserve their unique status, or more likely finding ways of restoring it, should provide an unusual challenge.

The most dangerous pitfall of all is if they contradict the common wisdom regarding 'space creatures.' The player characters might have some general knowledge of Hivers, but the residents do not. While Hivers are peaceful, residents of Hokum will never believe this.

Thanks to the popular media, the entire community believes all aliens are malign. The adventurers will seriously tax their standing and erode their credibility if they comment otherwise. If they insist the visitors mean no harm, or try to convince others of this, the community will treat the group with disdain. Some might see them as charlatans. However, the recurring themes of clones, pod people, and mind-controlling spores in Pradock's space literature might give rise to darker suspicions.

THE HIVERS

Six Hivers crew *Vierpax*. These are Gooxit (pilot/commander), Blet (navigator), Qatat (chief engineer), Wrateck (2nd engineer/ship's boat pilot), Phlesk (medic), and Sponnor (steward/gunner). Those outside (all but Qatat) are separated and out of touch with one another.

Being Hivers, they will tend to hide in holes, drain pipes, caves, maintenance shafts, basements, and other subterranean places. Hokum has plenty of these.

A few of the Hivers can understand spoken Galanglic, the language of the Imperium. A couple depend entirely on their (probably broken) electronic translators. All of them understand Gurvin, the predominant oral language of the Hive Federation.

EVENTS

The referee should have a few events prepared in advance for possible use in the adventure so as to maintain the flow of action. The following serve as examples.

Alien Sighting: Someone has surprised an alien under his porch, but is himself now in shock. The Hiver might have left some objects behind, possibly even some curious documents signed by a Jack Straw.

Runaway Air Raft: A child found the key to the vehicle the adventurers came in and, on a dare, has started it. But the vehicle has also gone into motion. The child cannot control it.

Woman Kidnapped: Word gets out that aliens hid for a time in a house on the outskirts of town, the residence of three single women. Two are gone for the holiday. One is now missing. Actually, the missing woman also left unannounced after a disagreement with her fiancé over whose family they would spend the Armistice with. The young man will be very brash and demanding of the adventurers in the search.

Friendly Troll: Children have made a secret friend of a "troll" hiding in a drainage tunnel. In fact, it's a Hiver who has restored its translator by cannibalizing a hand sensor. Guided by maternal instincts, the Hiver has won their affection

even without the youngsters ever seeing it. The children steal food (mushrooms), tools, and electrical wire for it. In return, they received a small 'magic' ball that lights with each bounce.

PERSONALITIES

Billy Peters: A persistent 10-year-old, Billy is an enthusiastic member of the Lt. Lazer Fan Club and a Lair Chief in the Rangers, a boys' organization. He has seen and heard every Lt. Lazer episode, avidly follows competing shows, and reads all the space adventure comic books. He is an expert and takes every opportunity to show off his knowledge to the characters.

Firm in the belief that he has a responsibility to assist the adventurers, he will be at their side every minute he can, usually with a following of young friends. Even if the adult citizens lose faith in the characters, his will not wane. If the group says things inconsistent with the Lt. Lazer shows, he will assume they are testing him, or speaking in code, or doing it for good reasons he does not yet see.

By consulting Billy and his resource of comic books, the adventurers can learn more of what the township expects of them, what they will believe, and how to perform in their role as "space heroes." This will help them maintain or regain the faith of the people.

Mayor Henry Goodsbee: Vocal and perpetually in the public eye, Goodsbee will do whatever he perceives as popular and conform to general attitudes. He uses several leading citizens as barometers for public opinion, these being Sheriff Deerdale, Fire Marshal Riley, Elizabeth Harohew, Rev. Bower, Barlow Dillon, and Dr. Mattock.

Sheriff Hank Deerdale: He will quietly resent the player characters while they still have favor, and make a point of putting them in their place after.

Deputy Tom Nelson: A young, amiable man who will tend to appreciate the characters even when the rest of the township might regard them with suspicion. He has influence with the sheriff, and their best chance to coerce the sheriff will be through him.

Fire Marshal William Riley: Hokum has a large fire-fighting force with Riley at its head. The fire fighters sponsor many important community functions. Volunteer firemen will predominantly be the ones responding to Hokum's emergency.

Dr. Lawrence Mattock: Although highly respected, Mattock is actually a poor doctor even by Pradock's standards. The locals brought the "finger" tentacle, found at the bar, for analysis. Pressed for information, Mattock pronounced that the creature came from a hot, sulfurous world with a heavy gravity and dull red sun. The species was carnivorous, probably subsisting largely on

brain matter, thus had a higher intellect at the expense of their slave creatures. He substantiated his conclusions with double-talk to the admiring locals.

The player characters present a threat to Mattock since they could expose him. He will obstruct their study of the tentacle. If the adventurers disagree with his conclusions, he will defend his statements vigorously and denounce the characters. If they instead support his conclusions, Mattock will likely support the characters in return.

Rev. Gary Bower: Bower regards the aliens as "demon spawn" and will be among the most fanatical in the efforts to kill the "invaders." He is also the chief defender of morality for the community, and has little liking for things foreign.

Barlow Dillon: Owner of the town bank and de facto leader of Hokum's business interests. Dillon will subtly encourage the adventurers to spend money. Even when the characters lose popularity, Dillon will listen to the adventurers if what they say has money in it.

Donald Hinkson: Vocal and impatient, Donald is among those who might lead his friends in a brash hunt for the aliens.

Elizabeth Harohew: Teacher of grammar, school disciplinarian, and chairwoman of the PTA. Children stay out of her sight whenever possible. Although cantankerous, she is among the most intelligent and rational of Hokum's residents. She can be convinced to see reason, especially if she sees Jack Straw's signature on the documents carried by the aliens. Elizabeth knew young Jack Straw only too well.

Carl Mueller: Town fool and drunkard, although he was well educated before falling to personal problems. He has sobered up since his encounter with the Hivers. Now, Carl is remarkably insightful, although detached from what's going on. He might offer offhand advice to the adventurers, such as to point out a mistake or mention traits about key personalities that could help the group.

RESCUE

The Hivers will do well in evading searchers. Still, the referee should lead the players to think hunters could find and kill the Hivers at any time. Waiting for provincial authorities would be too late. And, even if the characters try to contact the authorities, they will find an unwieldy bureaucracy, endless buck-passing and general disinterest.

Giving the searchers misinformation and steering them away from the Hivers will buy time. For example, they might tell teams the aliens prefer high places so they can pounce. Meanwhile, the players characters could consult local chil-

dren for probable underground locations where Hivers might really hide.

A direct search by the adventurers will eventually uncover Hivers. But the group will likely first have encounters with drunk and trigger-happy searchers, poorly trained hunting dogs, and local animals. Inventing clever strategies will eliminate a lot of aggravation.

For instance, they could use a public address system to give the Hivers a message in Gurvin, something like, "Relitgod co len honner gar!" This could mean, "Rescue is below the water tower!" If handled right, the characters can pass this off to the locals as an off-world phrase of warding to protect against aliens. The residents might then use it elsewhere within earshot of the aliens.

The Hivers themselves will also work to save themselves. Some will send messages in their ideographic language. If the adventurers can translate them, they might be able to find where a few Hivers will try to rendezvous.

Hivers with Electronics skill could also try to modify radios or repair their own communicators. Characters can use Communication skill to try homing in on the elusive transmissions. Qatat, aboard the ship, will eventually rig a temporary antenna for short-range communication, so the adventurers will at least be able to speak with that Hiver at some point.

Once the adventurers have collected the aliens, their next concern is for *Vierpix*. Given enough time, local mechanics will use the artillery gun and breach the ship. In desperation, Qatat might try to fly the vessel or fire the lasers, tasks for which it has no skill at all.

To at least get Gooxit aboard, the group can create diversions to help the Hiver sneak up to the ship via a drainage pipe running from the ball field to the woods. They might also try smuggling the crew to the ship in some fashion, or stage a prisoner exchange pretending one of the player characters was taken hostage. Any bluff could potentially work, especially if its patterned after a familiar science-fiction episode.

CONCLUSION

The Hivers will reward the characters with gold coins valued at Cr20,000 in the Reformation Coalition. They cannot afford more than that.

However, the crew of *Vierpix* will file a complete statement and affidavits of the swindle with the Pradock who will then forward it to the Reformation Coalition. The RC will set a Cr50,000 bounty for Jack Straw. Although Jack will change his name, the characters stand a good chance of finding him if they learn as much as they can about him from the residents of Hokum. Ω

Lethality in Roleplaying Small Arms Systems

Actual close-range combat shootings cast light on the subject of small arms fire in this New Era article by Frank Chadwick

I know of few issues in roleplaying systems that cause as much passionate argument as do small arms fire, both hit probability and damage. Over the years I have heard repeated complaints about the "low lethality" of what was originally the **Twilight: 2000** combat system, and which is now GDW's core roleplaying system. I don't know how many times I've heard actually *angry* gamers tell me that they can hit a man-size target 100% of the time at X range, and our rules are BS because they have less than a 50% chance, or even worse. Or that this wound or that wound might or might not knock someone down in the game, but in "real life" would invariably prove fatal.

It's always been my feeling that these arguments produce a great deal more heat than light, and are usually based on personal prejudice and repeated viewings of Hollywood war movies, rather than a serious examination of facts. So in the spirit of casting real light on the subject, I'd like to present a series of actual close-range combat shootings, all drawn from the experiences of the San Diego Police Department's experimental Border Crime Task Force during the 18 months of its existence.

A rugged area of undeveloped canyons and gullies along the US-Mexican border between San Diego and Tijuana was the site of numerous nocturnal border crossings by illegal aliens. That was the responsibility of the US Immigration Service. But the people coming north illegally were being systematically brutalized by gangs of crooks—robbery, assault and rape were commonplace, and as the violence escalated murder would be as well. That was the responsibility of the San

Diego Police Department, since this area of rugged ravines, even though a barren wilderness, was inside the city limits.

The Task Force members, fewer than a dozen undercover policemen disguised as illegal immigrants, went into the canyons at night and waited to be attacked. When it happened, they made arrests, or tried to. Given the environment, it was only a matter of time before deadly force was used by both sides in what became a running guerrilla war.

The following represents most of the actual exchanges of gunfire that took place during the unit's existence. I will present as much information as I know, and make a few observations at the end, but leave gamers to draw their own conclusions as to hit probabilities and weapon lethality.

1. February 1, 1976

Sergeant Lopez (the Task Force supervisor) and Officer Castillo encountered two suspects near the Mexican border deep in the canyons. One was a well-dressed man armed with a .45-caliber automatic, the other dressed in rags and apparently unarmed. At close range (a few yards), the gunman covered the two officers with his automatic, first pointing it at Sergeant Lopez. Both officers squatted on the ground and continued their pretense that they were illegal immigrants. When the gunman shifted the pistol to his left hand and turned it on Officer Chacon, Sergeant Lopez quickly reached into his clothing, drew the .38 special snub-nosed revolver from his shoulder holster, and fired all five rounds at the gunman in rapid succession. (The weapon was apparently a Smith & Wesson Model

36 Chief's Special, which holds only five rounds in the cylinder.) Several rounds hit the gunman and jerked him around. As he twisted to the side, Officer Castillo drew his own pistol and shot the gunman once as he fell to the ground.

The second suspect began to flee, Officer Castillo fired again, and that suspect also fell to the ground. Castillo ran to the prone suspect and, overcome by an adrenaline reaction, lost control and began beating him.

The gunman, it turned out, was Officer Luis Tamez of the Mexican Immigration service and the ragged suspect was reported to be his informant. The exact reason why Officer Tamez was on the US side of the border and what his intentions were remained a source of controversy.

Of the six shots fired at point blank range at Tamez (five by Lopez and one by Castillo), five hit. Two bullets struck him in the groin, one hit him in the right chest directly over the nipple, one hit his arm, and one hit his buttock as he spun around and fell to the ground. Of all of these, the chest wound was the most visible, as Tamez's shirt immediately became soaked with blood, but it did the least damage, as the .38 Special bullet bounced off Tamez's rib cage and did only superficial damage. The two groin hits were the most dangerous, and all of the participants were convinced that Tamez was dying. Since cross-winds were too strong to allow a helicopter to land in the canyons, the two officers tried to manhandle Tamez up the steep wall, but Tamez found it so painful to be dragged over the rocks that he demanded to be laid down and then got up, pushed the officers away, and climbed out of the canyon under his own power.



Both of the wounded men recovered completely.

2. March 23, 1976

Officers Chacon, Vasquez, Salgado, Castillo, and Gil were together in Deadman's Canyon sitting on the banks of a shallow dry streambed when they were approached by two suspects. Officer Chacon was on one side of the ditch and the others were on the opposite side, their legs dangling over the edge. The suspects approached from Chacon's side. One suspect, later identified as Morales, was armed with a pistol, and the other, identified as Madrid, was armed with a long-bladed knife.

All of the police officers were armed; most of them had two revolvers. Castillo had three revolvers and a shotgun. Several of them also wore bullet-proof vests. Of the five officers, two were combat veterans—both Salgado and Gil were Marine NCOs with extensive combat experience in Vietnam and both were former drill instructors. Gil had also been all-Marine Judo Champion.

Morales covered the officers with his pistol and ordered them to put their hands up. Madrid jumped to the other side of the streambed to search them for valuables, still believing them to be illegal immigrants. All of the officers and suspects were now thoroughly mingled and all were probably within three or four meters of each other.

Officer Castillo, armed with a short pump shotgun under his coat, was probably the first to fire. He pointed the shotgun at Morales and fired, hitting him in the gun hand and blowing most of the fingers off, disarming him in the process. All of the other officers except for Gil drew their revolvers and began firing. Chacon and Vasquez both emptied their revolvers in rapid succession. Gil (the former judo champ) dove at Morales just as he was hit by the shotgun blast, and Morales, riddled with bullets, fell on top of Gil in the bottom of the ditch.

The second suspect ran into the night pursued by Chacon and Vasquez, still firing. After a brief chase the second suspect fell wounded.

The first bandit lay on top of Gil, apparently dead. In addition to the shattered hand from Castillo's shotgun, he had received seven other bullet wounds at point blank range: one each to the right shoulder, left lower chest, left side of the back, upper spine, left elbow, and two over the right clavicle.

Amazingly, he was still alive.

The second bandit was shot three times, once in each leg by pistol shots and once straight through the neck, from one side to the other, by a stray buckshot pellet.

Two of the officers were wounded. Castillo, shortly after firing his shotgun, had reached out to grab the wounded suspect and had been shot straight through the wrist, and was almost immediately incapacitated by pain. Gil, as he dove for Morales, was shot in the hip. Both officers were inadvertently shot by officer Chacon, firing across the ditch from the other side.

All four injured men survived and recovered.

3. July 9, 1976

Sergeant Lopez and officers Cervantes, Puente, and Camacho (in that order from south to north) were concealed in a drainage pipe at the south end of the E-2 canyon, less than a dozen meters north of the international border. Officer Chacon was concealed outside of the pipe to observe the approach of any suspects. All were armed with revolvers, and Officer Camacho had a pump-action shotgun as well.

About an hour after dusk a suspect in a ski mask approached the south end of the pipe. The suspect, in a remarkable display of strength, seized Sergeant Lopez by the arm, pulled him bodily from the pipe, and dragged him down a slope into a ravine where there were three other suspects.

At the bottom of the ravine, Sergeant Lopez was surrounded by four suspects, all apparently armed and covering him. The suspect to his left held a rifle (although this later turned out to be a dummy). The suspect in front of him and another to his right covered him with pistols. The leader of the group, the man in the ski mask (later identified as "Lobo"), held Lopez's shooting arm in a vice-like grip and held a knife in his free hand. While Lobo still held his shooting arm, Lopez managed to get his hand to his waistband and draw his five-shot Model 36 and quickly emptied it in a semicircle around him: one shot to the man holding the rifle, then one at the man in front of him, then one into Lobo, holding his arm, then the last two bullets at the man to his right. At this point, the suspects scattered and began to flee, except for Lobo, struggling with Lopez.

Officer Cervantes scrambled out of the south end of the pipe and fired one

round at the fleeing suspects with his revolver while Officer Camacho crawled out of the north end of the pipe and fired twice with his shotgun, dropping one of the fleeing suspects (who later rose and continued to flee). Camacho then dropped his shotgun, drew his pistol, and fired five more shots at the fleeing suspects. Officer Cervantes pursued a suspect for several meters into Mexico, fired one more shot at him, and then returned. As he returned, one of the suspects fired first four pistol shots at the officers from out of the darkness and later fired a fifth. Officer Chacon shortly afterwards heard four other shots fired at them from a different direction.

The officers fired a total of two shotgun shells and about a dozen pistol shots. Of these, apparently one shotgun shell and two pistol shots scored hits. Lopez's point-blank shot at the bandit leader had broken his thigh and lodged in his hip, incapacitating him. None of the other suspects were captured, although two were later seen wounded. (One was admitted to a Mexican hospital with his leg badly lacerated by buckshot. He was arrested by Mexican police. The other burst into a party, his chest soaked with blood, then fled again. He was never apprehended, nor was the fourth suspect.)

Of the nine rounds fired at the police, none hit.

4. July 19, 1976

Officers Salgado, Camacho, and Chacon were acting as decoys near the border when they were spotted by two officers of the Tijuana Municipal Police, Officers Hernandez and Espindola, who considered their actions suspicious and investigated with revolvers drawn, using their flashlights. A second task force team, consisting of Sergeant Lopez and officers Puente, Vasquez, and Castillo, were nearby under cover and were soon also seen by Officer Hernandez, who considered their actions atypical of illegal border crossers and suspected that they were criminals. The two task force teams joined up by a gully as Hernandez climbed down to confront them. At his point Sergeant Lopez, believing the two Tijuana policemen were trying to extort money from border crossers, jumped down from his side of the ravine to face Hernandez, held up his badge in his left hand and his revolver in his right, and yelled "Policia! Policia!" All of the task force members drew and pointed

CYBER HEROTM

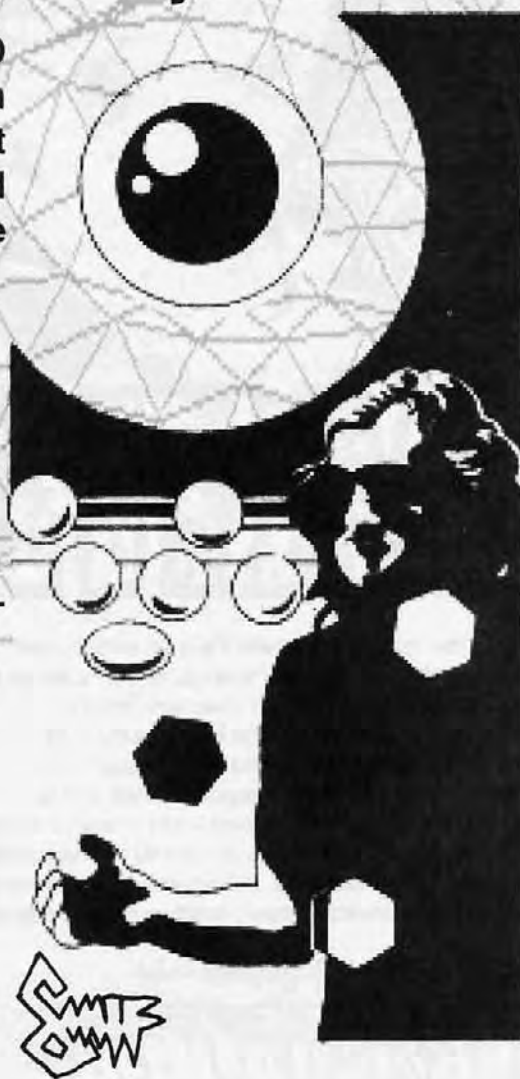
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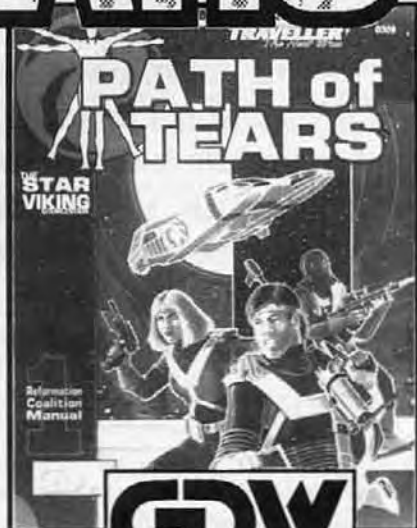
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their guns as Officer Espindola screamed the unnecessary warning to Hernandez, "He's got a gun!"

Hernandez, instead of firing, raised his pistol and struck Lopez in the chest with the barrel, knocking him down. Later everyone would have a different impression of who fired first. Hernandez got off five rounds before collapsing under a hail of San Diego Police fire, and his partner Espindola emptied his pistol (apparently a 10-round automatic) as he scrambled back toward their squad car. The Task Force members all fired, and fired a total of one shotgun round and 33 pistol rounds. These broke down as follows:

Fired At Hernandez: 14 pistol shots from Puente, Castillo, Camacho, Chacon, and Lopez.

Fired At Espindola: 19 pistol shots from Salgado, Castillo (his second pistol), Vasquez, Camacho, and Chacon (his second pistol).

Fired At Both: One shotgun shell from Vasquez in the general direction of both officers (after which the shotgun jammed and Vasquez drew his pistol).

Three officers were wounded in the incident.

Espindola was hit four times: once in the leg and then three more times in the back as he crawled back toward his squad car. He reached his squad car and drove away for help. Taken to a hospital, he recovered from his wounds and later returned to duty.

Hernandez, the closer of the two, was hit twice, and ballistics tests showed that both bullets were fired by Officer Chacon. Amazingly, Lopez, lying at Hernandez's feet, had missed with all three shots he fired. One of Chacon's bullets hit Hernandez in the abdomen and the other hit him in the arm. He attempted to crawl back across the border but was seized by the task force officers and arrested. He later recovered from his wounds and returned to duty.

Chacon was hit once in the upper arm, recovered fully, and returned to duty.

5. January 25, 1977

Sergeant Lopez, officers Puente, Castillo, Chacon, and Vasquez encountered a group of three suspects who pretended to be undercover police and tried to extort money from them. When Puente moved to cut off the retreat of the bandits south, a suspect jumped on him with a long knife and began

struggling. Officer Vasquez jumped on the back of the suspect and, fearing that he was about to stab Puente, put his snub-nosed .38-caliber Special against the back of the suspect's head and fired once. The pistol shot instantly killed the assailant and temporarily blinded Vasquez. Puente had not even seen the knife.

At the same time one of the suspects lunged at Sergeant Lopez with a knife. Lopez fired once at the suspect at point-blank range, and then fired again as the suspect dashed by him. Lopez then emptied his pistol at the fleeing suspect and when that had no effect began to pursue him on foot. Eventually he overtook the suspect and overpowered him. After the struggle the suspect noticed, for the first time, that he had been wounded once in the elbow.

The third suspect was facing Officer Chacon, who this night was armed with a shotgun. Chacon raised the shotgun and, at a range nearly close enough to touch the suspect with his hand, discharged the shotgun once directly into the center of the suspect's chest. The suspect stood for a moment looking at him, then turned around and walked calmly away into the darkness. Unsure whether he had somehow missed the target or the suspect was wearing some form of body armor, Chacon followed him cautiously and soon found him lying peacefully on the ground, dead of massive chest injuries. (San Diego Police Lieutenant Richard Snider would later describe the wound as "...a hole in his chest you could throw a cat through.")

Observations

In the five incidents presented above, task force officers fired about 90 rounds, most of them at close range, and scored 29 hits, or 32%. Of even more interest are the eight shots fired while effectively in physical contact with the target (one shot by Lopez at the leader "Lobo" in incident three, three shots by Lopez at Hernandez in incident four, and in

incident five two of Lopez's five shots at his suspect, Chacon's one shot and Vasquez's one shot). Of these eight shots, only four were hits, or 50%. Finally, it is interesting how many of the casualties were achieved by one man, Chacon. Although he apparently did not fire or score hits in incident three and was not present for incident one, he hit with his only shot in the fifth incident, was the only officer to hit Hernandez in the fourth incident, and actually scored at least one, and perhaps more, hits on every man (including the two friendly officers) wounded in the second incident.

As to bullet lethality, a total of 15 officers and suspects were wounded in these five incidents, and they were hit by a total of 32 bullets. Most of the injured men were struck by a single bullet; four were struck by multiple bullets, and of these one was struck by eight bullets. Of these 15 casualties, two were killed almost instantly while the other 13 survived and recovered. All of those who suffered multiple gunshot wounds recovered. That is, none of the fatalities were caused by a cumulative build-up of trauma, but rather were due to a single, almost instantly fatal wound.

There are not enough cases here to provide the statistical basis for a complete small arms combat system, but there is plenty of food for thought. The breakdown of the hits by body area is shown on the chart at the bottom of the page. The first column shows the body area. The second shows the number of hits to that area. The third shows the proportion of the total hits suffered by that body area. The fourth shows the number of fatal wounds to that body area. The last column shows the proportion of wounds to that area which were fatal.

Reference

Wambaugh, Joseph, *Lines & Shadows*. 1984. ISBN 0-688-02619-2

Area	Total Hits	Of All	Fatal	Fatal
Head & Neck	2	.06	1	.5
Chest	11*	.34	1	.09
Abdomen	4 *	.13	0	.0
Limbs	15	.47	0	.0
All Combine	32	1.00	2	.06

*The chest and abdomen totals assume that of the three shots taken by Officer Espindola in the back, two were in the chest and one in the abdomen. Ω



COALINFONET, CLASS: NEWSREPORT, DISTRIBUTION: BUS/POL, AUTHORITY CIN/AUBAINE
RC ASSEMBLY HALL, AUBAINE (0738/AUBAINE, A78A884-C), 17/X/1201
KEYWORDS: CSAARC, AAS, FIJA

Speaking against "the inefficiencies of Efficiency," junior Fijan delegate Catarrhina Mohler launched a campaign to rationalize the "pervasive" influence of the Committee for the Standardization of Armament and Ammunition in the Reformation Coalition, better known as CSAARC.

"Although the Committee fulfills an important role in husbanding the scarce resources of this Coalition and should continue to do so, certain of its initiatives come under the heading of micromanagement and actually waste energy, rather than conserving it. Now is the time, while CSAARC is still a relatively new organization, that we establish guidelines to ensure that CSAARC's oversight is confined to the rational use of resources, rather than the worship of the least common denominator."

Speaker Mohler introduced as evidence the Reformation Coalition Automatic Assault Shotgun (RCAAS), recently adopted by CSAARC as the standard combat shotgun of the RC forces. Mohler demonstrated that, although the weapon itself is manufactured at tech level 10, it is not completed until it is fitted with a laser sight manufactured on a tech 9 world. Because tech 10 worlds are capable of manufacturing more compact laser sights, the installation of a TL-9 sight on the weapon results in a combat shotgun "which is 40% more expensive than it needs to be, and which is 7% heavier than it ought to be." Mohler also produced internal RCES reports which evaluate the weapon as overweight.

"These are not the type of savings which we can afford. Rather than seeking to divide the production of each weapon across tech level 9 and 10 worlds, CSAARC's efforts would be better spent ensuring that each world's productive capacity was used to build complete systems. This would mean that Trybec and Fija would install locally built sights on locally built weapons, while worlds like Oriflamme, Baldur and Nike Nimbus were allowed to concentrate their full attention on building weapons from start to finish that are optimized for their technology."

Mohler asked that the Assembly create a panel to evaluate, define and, if necessary, modify the mandate of CSAARC. Mohler's motion was tabled after minimal discussion. Delegates from Oriflamme, originally one of the staunchest opponents of the creation of CSAARC, provided the margin of defeat.

CSAARC was established in 1200 to coordinate the design and production of weapons and ammunition by Coalition member worlds. The Assembly sought to preserve the Coalition's limited manufacturing base by concentrating it on the production and support of standardized designs optimized for available technology, and based on common relic equipment. CSAARC has since expanded its mandate to include the creation of new designs unique to the Coalition, for example, the controversial 5.5mm assault rifle.

RCES MIL TRAFFIC, CLASS: NOTICE TO STARFARERS, DISTRIBUTION: MANDTY, AUTHORITY COMMANDER, RCES DAWN
BASE (TRYBEC/0336/AUBAINE, B443610-A), 26/X/1201
KEYWORDS: VIRUS, HAZARD TO TRAVEL, VAMPIRE

RC space forces have issued a Notice to Starfarers for the Arvid (0131/Aubaine) and Mitchell (3034/Khulam/Diaspora) star systems. These systems appear to present an active Viral or vampire threat, and are to be avoided until more information becomes available.

Arvid is thought to be connected to the disappearance of several vessels, including Dawn League Ships *Reine Soleil* and *Lady Elise*, although it is not known by what mechanism these disappearances were caused, or even if they were the result of a single cause.

Mitchell is believed to be the base of an active and growing vampire fleet, and is probably connected to the loss of Dawn League Ship *Helios*, missing since 19/XI/1199.

RC space forces will attempt to evaluate and neutralize these threats. Private exploration is not advised.

Exercise extreme caution when entering or passing near these systems, and if possible, avoid passing through them at all. Even gas giant refueling is considered to be hazardous in these systems.

COALINFONET, CLASS: NEWSREPORT, DISTRIBUTION: GOV/MIL, AUTHORITY CIN/AUBAINE
RCES HQ AUBAINE (0738/AUBAINE, A78A884-C), 21/XI/1201
KEYWORDS: COSMIC FIRE, DROYNE, PROTEST

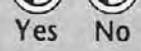
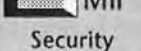
Reporter Gabrielle Diabla, twice winner of the Nimbus Palm for Excellence in Journalism, has filed a freedom of information demand with the RCES to gain access to orders and planning documents pertaining to "Operation Cosmic Fire."

Diabla made a public statement to call attention to the demand which she was filing, and to explain the background of her demand. Diabla explained that Cosmic Fire took place on Daaliisa (2725/Promise/Diaspora) some two months ago, and that it involved attacks on "apparently peaceful alien Droyne," and that for the operation the troops were obliged to remove their insignia, and take steps that this operation would not be connected to the Reformation Coalition. "This operation was piratical in appearance, if not in fact," Diabla said.

"I am not some fruit-loop peacenik who imagines evil motivations whenever a forceful act of will is committed. I am pursuing this story because I was aboard the ship when this operation was conducted, and I spoke to the troops when they left and when they returned. They were deeply disturbed by the operation. They felt they had done something wrong. I am not looking to blame these troops for carrying out a mission in good faith. What I am looking for is the reasons why the mission was ordered."

Gabrielle Diabla is a well-known and experienced military reporter. She has accompanied and covered numerous military operations under Dawn League and Coalition auspices for several years, including the famous annexation of Vezina. Diabla wrote a book on the Vezina operations, entitled, "Say Good Night, Hoss," which won her her second Nimbus Palm, in 1200.

Diabla's demand for documentation is complicated by the fact that not all RC member worlds recognize full information rights, which allows such worlds to deny access to commonly held RC documents in which they have a proprietary interest.



Gen

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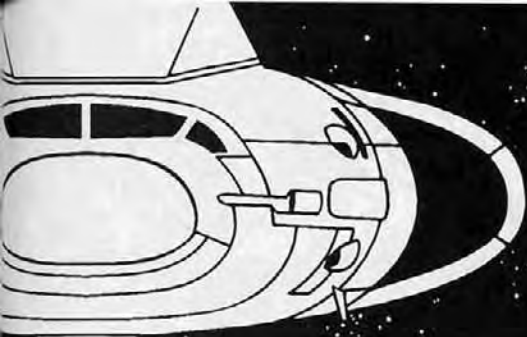
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BRILLIANT LANCES Tournaments

TOP LASER

The Brilliant Lances Tournaments
Summer 1994 Convention Season

Science Fiction Roleplaying Game

TRAVELLER®
The New Era

GDW

Strap in, starjockeys. The topic for this season's tournament is planetary raiding and defense.

GDW will be sponsoring **Brilliant Lances** tournaments at this summer's major conventions (scheduling will be announced as details become firmer) to establish answers to these two interlinked questions: Who is the best **Traveller: The New Era** ship designer, and who is the best **Traveller: The New Era** ship commander.

There will be two classes in which we will select winners: Raiders, and Planetary Defense Vessels. A Raider is a starship which inserts small commando teams and equipment onto hostile worlds, and picks them upon the completion of their missions. Planetary Defense Vessels (PDVs) attempt to prevent this.

The soundness of your design and your mastery of space combat tactics will be tested against another entrant who will pit his or her design against yours. The winning Raider will be the ship which fared best against the competing PDV designs, and the winning PDV will be the one which best fought off the Raider entries. The PDV will be the only opposition to the Raider accomplishing its mission; there will be no other planetary defenses.

If you win, we'll give you the coveted **TOP LASER** plaque and publish your design and a suitably lurid and heroic account of your victory. If you lose, well, that's up to you.

Design parameters are as follows.

Raider

Raider must have jump-3 performance, fuel scoops, and fuel purification equipment sufficient to purify a full load of jump fuel in 12 hours.

Ship must be capable of landing on and taking off from a world with an atmosphere, either by airframe hull with or without contra-grav, or by streamlined hull with contra-grav. The ship may carry subsidiary vehicles, but these may not be used to fulfill the troop insertion or pick-up requirements; the raider must be able to do this itself.

Ship must have space for exactly 12 troops and at least 700 cubic meters/tonnes of cargo.

Success in the scenario is defined as follows: The Raider must be able to land on the world, take off again on the following turn, and safely jump. Hits on the Raider, particularly against its troops and its cargo space, are counted against it. Whether the mission is an insertion (carrying troops and cargo in, leaving empty) or recovery (coming in empty and carrying troops and cargo out) will be determined randomly at the beginning of the scenario.

Budget is MCr 200.

Planetary Defense Vessel

Planetary Defense Vessel (or vessels) need not be jump capable. If the budget is used to purchase more than one vessel, one of these must be the "mother craft" in which all of the others are carried. Vessel need not be streamlined, nor carry any refueling equipment (scoops or purifiers).

Success in the scenario is defined as preventing the success of the Raider. Hits on the PDV are counted against it.

Budget is MCr 140.

The following standards apply to both the Raider and Planetary Defense Vessel.

Maximum tech level is 12. No relic technology from higher tech levels may be used. Only standard "Imperial Space" technology may be used.

All crew may be carried two per small stateroom. A full load of fuel is included for free; however, all other consumable materials must be paid for out of the budget.

No more than 10% of the budget may be spent on expendables (missiles, drones, sensor decoys) that are used and not recovered during the course of the scenario—standard solid-fuel (EAPlaC) missiles are not recoverable for these purposes. Sand cannisters do not count against this ceiling.

Both players' starting positions will be randomized with respect to the target planet, so make your sensor and maneuver design decisions accordingly.

All designs must be submitted to GDW for approval (the deadline for this approval will be announced later). Submissions must include a fully detailed worksheet showing all calculations, including calculations for newlydesigned subsidiary weapons, if any.

Submitting a design constitutes granting permission to GDW to publish this design in its original or altered form in future GDW products.

Full details may be obtained by sending a SASE to **"TOP LASER '94"** at the GDW address, or over GENIE (GDW.SUPPORT), AoL (GDW GAMES), or Internet (GDW.SUPPORT@GENIE.GEIS.COM) after March 15.

ICE. ICE, Baby

A Dark Conspiracy adventure

by Michael C. LaBossiere

Everybody thought it was an instance of the infamous "Down-East" humor when a lobster man radioed us that there was a large iceberg and several smaller 'bergs in the area. The captain broadcasted an "iceberg warning" over the ship's intercom, and we all had a good laugh. We stopped laughing when a chunk of ice punched a hole in the hull, and the ship began its descent into the Atlantic.

This adventure is set off the coast of Maine and embroils the PCs in an invasion attempt by beings from an alien dimension. This adventure is fairly difficult, and the party should contain mostly experienced PCs. The party can also be beefed up with NPCs as needed.

At the start of the adventure, the PCs will be on a relaxing, all-day cruise along the Maine coast. This cruise can be paid for by the PCs (about \$75-100 per person) or can be a gift from someone the PCs have benefited. The first part of the cruise will be enjoyable and includes a seafood feed (lobster, clams, etc.) as well as whale watching (there are still a few left around Maine, which strictly enforces its tough environmental laws).

On the way back to the port, night will fall, and it will become chilly. Those familiar with the area will say it's colder than usual. Two hours from port, those on deck will see a bright flash (like lightning) in the distance. About an hour from port, a lobster man will radio the ship and say that he has sighted a large iceberg in the area, as well as several smaller, fast-moving 'bergs. The captain, thinking it's a joke, will broadcast the transmission over the intercom. While everyone is having a good laugh, what appears to be a fast-moving chunk of ice will smash into the ship and pierce its wooden hull. The captain will stop laughing and send out a frantic Mayday.

DEATH IN THE WATER

The stricken vessel will begin taking on water immediately, and those on deck will see the "ice" move away from the ship and then strike it again. This should clue them in that all is not right. The "ice" is in fact a Yesqi. It will continue to attack the boat until it sinks it (this will take 20+1D10 minutes from the first attack). After sinking the ship, it will pursue any lifeboats in the water, and after that, it will pursue any individual humans in the water.

While the creature is attacking the vessel, the ship's four lifeboats (each capable of holding six people safely) can be lowered over the side (on the side the Yesqi is not attacking, or it may smash into them).

Luckily for those on board, there is a nearby island with a working lighthouse on it. Its beacon is easily visible. Rowing to the island will take about 20 minutes if two skilled and strong rowers are rowing in each boat. Fortunately, the local current pulls objects toward the island.

The exodus to the island should be handled by the referee in such a manner as to stimulate fear and excitement, and kill off some NPCs. Descriptions of this sort should be used: "The light of the lighthouse reveals a scene of terror: You can see, for an instant, the terrified faces of those behind you as something smashes into their boat. Mercifully, darkness quickly cloaks the scene. On the next pass of the light, you see only wreckage and torn bodies borne by the waves...." The PCs should have a frightening close call, but should be allowed to reach the island, provided they don't do anything really stupid (like trying to attack the creature from a lifeboat).

REACHING THE BEACH

The surviving boats will soon find themselves being pulled toward the island. The current will draw the boats toward a particularly rocky section. Nearby is a safer area. Beaching the boat in the safe section is an Average task using the Vessel Use (Boat) skill. If this roll fails, the boat will be pulled toward the rocks, and a Difficult: Vessel Use (Boat) skill roll will be required. If this roll fails, the boat is smashed on the rocks, and those on-board are tossed into the sea. Those in the sea must make a Difficult roll using their Swimming skill to reach the shore safely. If the roll fails, a character must make another Difficult: Swimming roll to avoid being bashed up against the rocks (inflicting 2D6 damage). The next turn, the char-

acter may attempt to reach shore again. Those on shore or in the boats may attempt to help those in the water (the exact effects are left up to the referee).

The Yesqi will attempt to pursue the survivors, but it, too, must avoid being smashed on the rocks (it should be treated as having a Swimming skill of 10). If it is smashed against the rocks, it cannot attack the next turn and must escape them (a Difficult skill check, failure resulting in being stuck another turn). It also takes damage from being bashed against the rocks (its greater bulk results in it taking 4D6 damage).

If the survivors reach land, they will be safe from the Yesqi, which cannot leave the water. It will remain in the area as long as the survivors are in sight (unless they are shooting at it, of course). If the survivors move inland, where it cannot see them, it will swim around the island, waiting for them.

BAXTER ISLAND

The island is located about two miles off the Maine coast. It is a rather small island, and has only a few scraggly pines and some beach grass on it. Most of it consists of weather- and sea-worn granite. Located on top of a small hill is a lighthouse which was originally placed in the 1800s to warn ships of a series of granite "almost islands" that lay just beneath the surface in the area. These "almost islands" are somewhat of an anomaly, and their existence has not been adequately explained. Each "almost island" has a bell buoy on top of it, and their eerie tolling can be heard on the island. According to local legend, the bells are rung by those who have died in the sea.

Dock: The dock is a heavy-duty, wooden dock, designed to handle vessels as large as Coast Guard cutters (the water is fairly deep off the dock, which is why it is there).

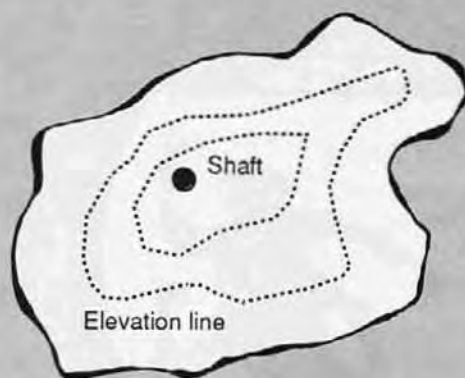
Shack: The shack is locked and contains several cans of fuel, a tool box, an old bicycle, some old boots and rain gear.

Road: A worn-down and rutted dirt road. It was built when the lighthouse was constructed.

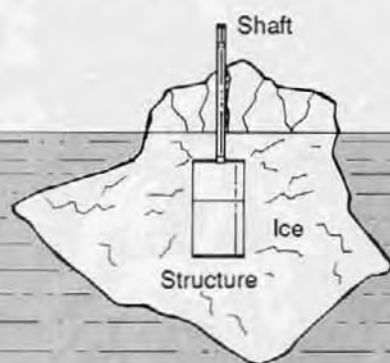
Trails: With the decline of the environment, virtually all unpolluted places have become of interest to people. The Maine government added the trail in the late 1990s, and they have been maintained with some degree of regularity ever since.



Iceberg Surface

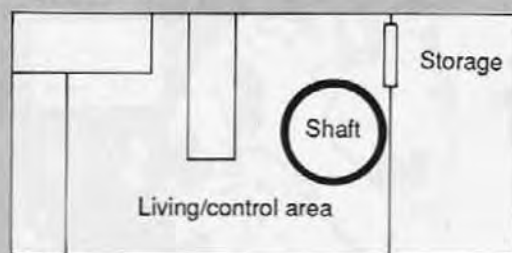


Iceberg Sideview

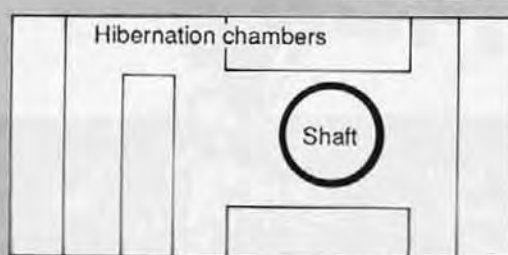


Structure Interior

Level 1



Levels 2-4



LIGHTHOUSE

The lighthouse consists of the actual lighthouse and a house for the lighthousekeeper. The house was added in the early 1920s when a married man took over the job. It was inhabited until 1964 when the lighthouse was automated. The house is locked and boarded up, and the lighthouse is locked.

Porch: A worn-down porch, complete with a swinging seat.

Living Room: Contains dusty and cobwebbed furniture, which was left when the lighthouse was automated.

Kitchen and Dining Room: The kitchen has a wood-burning stove and a gas stove. There is still wood present, as well as a few old cooking implements. The sink will produce water (although it tastes funny) from the old tank, which is still about half full.

Bedrooms: The bedrooms are dusty, but do contain usable furniture.

Bathroom: A working bathroom with an old style toilet (gravity flush).

Closet: Contains an old, much patched, heavy, yellow raincoat.

Storage: Contains almost a century's accumulation of junk: old furniture, toys, boxes of magazines, broken appliances and so forth. Also contains boxes of spare parts for the lighthouse and fuel for the generator.

Lighthouse Interior: The bottom floor of the lighthouse is taken up primarily by a generator and a very large fuel tank. There is a radio set up on a table here. Unfortunately, water has leaked onto it, rendering it inoperable. Access

to the lighthouse is via a very steep spiral staircase. The top floor has large glass windows and affords an excellent view of the area (at night, the view is limited to what the light reveals). There is an old flare gun hanging on a nail, as well as a pair of old binoculars on a small table.

UNWELCOME GUESTS

About an hour after the survivors reach the island, another group of survivors will arrive. These people are from a drug-running vessel which was attacked by a Yesqi and sunk. There will be a total of three survivors from the drug runner (four were killed by a Yesqi when the boat was sunk). These people are detailed below.

THE ICEBERG COMETH

About an hour after the drug runners arrive on the island, the light from the lighthouse will reveal a very odd sight. The light will sweep across what can only be a very large iceberg which appears to be being pulled by the current toward the island. The sweeping light will also reveal that a large black cylinder is sticking out of the iceberg. Smaller shapes (the Yesqi) swarm about the iceberg. If the iceberg is kept under observation, when the light swings by, those watching it will be able to see dark shapes moving about on its surface. Suddenly, there will be a bright flash from the iceberg in the darkness, and the top of the lighthouse will explode in a ball of fire (killing anyone there). Shortly afterward, the light of the moon will reveal dark shapes flying from the iceberg to the island.

ATTACK

The dark flying shapes are Galacians which are on their way to attack the island and kill everyone on it. The first attack will consist of four Galacians. If these do not succeed, the remaining Galacians will join the attack. The Galacians use icebergs as vessels of sorts. The 'berg entered Earth's dimension via a massive gate. Unfortunately for the Galacians, the iceberg, which was supposed to enter Earth's dimension in the antarctic along with the other invasion vessels, ended up in the ocean off the coast of Maine due to a freak gate accident. During the course of the accident, the iceberg was fragmented and lost its propulsion system as well as several other structures. All that remains is a single hibernation structure.

The surface of the iceberg is ice. Protruding from the ice is a two-meter-wide shaft made of metal. The outside

of the shaft has a ladder on it. The structure is embedded in the ice.

Shaft: The shaft is hollow, with sliding doors set on each level of the structure. The top has a double-paneled door on top to keep out rain, etc. None of the doors are locked, and they can easily be opened and closed using a single large button.

Living Control Area: This is the area in which the eight conscious Galacians live and work. The interior consists of semi-organic-looking controls which are quite odd looking. The interior is lit with a dim red light (which is the light of their proto-dimension's dying sun). Lying on one "table" are several maps etched on very strong metal foil. These maps are of Earth and several proto-dimensions. The maps are also covered with symbols. If the maps are turned over to a government or other powerful entity, the language will be translated, and it will be learned that there is a large-scale invasion of Earth's arctic regions by the Galacians.

Levels 2-4: Levels two through four contain hibernation chambers. The Galacians evolved from creatures with life cycles which involved their being frozen or dried out or both for long periods of time. Since the Galacians' trip to Earth took them through many proto-dimensions and has taken years of travel time through these spaces, the Galacians rotate their crews in and out of hibernation. The hibernation chambers consist of what appear to be panes of thick glass held together by the internal organs of a whale. The hibernation chambers are extremely cold and dry. Each chamber holds 34 "freeze dried" Galacians. They look even more horrifying when freeze dried, what with organic tubules piercing their hides and various things moving over the bodies, checking them for damage. The freeze-dried Galacians and the hibernation equipment are extremely vulnerable to flame. It takes two full days for a Galacian to be restored to normal from a freeze-dried state.

ACTION

The conscious Galacians will attack those on the island and attempt to secure it as a base of operation. They will do all in their power to keep their freeze-dried brethren safe from attack. Their first order of business is to secure the island. This amounts to killing all the humans on it. They will then begin awakening their frozen brethren. Once the revival process is started, they will cause the exterior of the structure to heat up. It will melt through the ice and come to

rest on one of the "almost islands" with the shaft protruding from the water. They will then destroy the rest of the iceberg as much as possible and let the chunks drift away.

Once established on the island, the invaders will begin to head inland, looking for fresh meat (humans). Some of the passengers from the cruise vessel will advocate talking to the arriving Galacians. Naturally, they will be slaughtered when they go out into the open.

The captain will want to keep as many people alive as possible, and he will want to warn the people on the mainland as to what is going on. The drug runners' leader will decide to fight the aliens. After all, they probably won't buy any drugs, and if everybody is dead, he'll be out of business. What the PCs want to do is, of course, up to them.

RESOLUTION

If the Galacians succeed in killing

Yesqi

#Appear: 1

Attack: 90%

Move: 13/25/50

Initiative: 1

Strength: 30

Constitution: 30

Agility: 2.

Skill/Dam: 4/3D10

Hits: 80/160

Special: Yesqi are treated as if their bodies have an armor value of 2 (the shell). Their exposed head, limbs and tail have no appreciable armor.

Yesqi appear to be giant sea turtle-like creatures with whitish shells that look like dirty ice. In their native climate (arctic seas), this shell serves as excellent camouflage. Their limbs are webbed like Terran turtles, but they have massive, razor-sharp claws that Terran turtles lack. Their mouths are also filled with jagged teeth. A Yesqi has between two and four rows of teeth, depending on their size and age. Their snouts also bear a horn-like structure which they use to impale their prey. This horn is also useful in punching holes in wooden-hulled boats. Yesqi are strict carnivores, and they can eat almost anything, thanks to the bacteria that reside in their digestive system.

While Yesqi are not particularly intelligent, they can be trained with suitable applications of force and reward when they are young. They are often employed by the Galacians, who raise them in large numbers and use them as war beasts.

Galacians

Strength: 13

Constitution: 16

Agility: 3

Intelligence: 6

Education: 1

Charisma: 2

Empathy: 1

Initiative: 3

Move: 3/9/15/30

Skill/Dam: 7/2D10

Hits: 25/50

#Appear: 1D6

The Galacian race evolved from a particularly vicious arctic predator. Like the earthly polar bear, this predator was adept at moving across the ice as well as swimming in the icy water. This predator was also a remarkable survivor. The climate in which it lived was plagued with periods of cold so extreme that almost nothing could survive in it. During such times, these creatures would enter an extreme form of hibernation, from which they would emerge months or years later. Over the course of time, the Galacians evolved into an intelligent race and spread out across their home world. The modern Galacians have six limbs—two of them have hands, and the other four end in bear-like paws with sharp talons. Their heads are large and have four eyes set in them (two in front and one on either side of the head), and they have powerful jaws with sharp teeth. Their bodies are covered with a thick, fur-like material.

For thousands of years, their culture thrived until their sun, already in its decline, began to fade even faster. The Galacians were a resourceful race, and having had discovered technological dimensional travel, the leaders decided on an exodus from their dying realm to a new dimension. Their scouts reported that Earth would be an excellent place to settle, so they set out constructing the ice vessels that would bear them on their journey.

Unfortunately for both the Galacians and humanity, a Dark One entered their world, and a tyrant arose who served it. This tyrant took the existing ice vessels for himself and his followers. Leaving the remaining Galacians to die, he set sail with his fleet to invade Earth's dimension for his new lord. Virtually all of the Galacians of the invasion fleet are Dark Minions and are servants of the Dark One who took over their home dimension. A few are secretly opposed to the Dark One, but are too afraid to act. Their home dimension is now a hell of ice in which horrible, imported beings and a few insane Galacians dwell.

everyone off, they will use the island as a base and raid the coast (while carefully concealing the location of their base). They will also attempt to get in contact with their fellows in the arctic regions of the Earth. If the Galacians are unopposed, they will eventually be able to take over several islands along Maine's coast, and their fellows will eventually take much of Earth's arctic regions as their own. If the PCs (or other survivors) escape and warn the mainland, the island will be investigated. This will result in a military attack on the Galacians, which will wipe them out. If the maps in the living/control area are found, there will be military operations in the arctic regions against the Galacians that will eventually succeed. The PCs may be brought into the action, if desired.

NPCs

Captain Rich Molderson: Molderson is a reserve naval officer who lives in Maine. During the summer, he earns extra money running a tour boat

operation with his sister. He is extremely dedicated to the United States, despite its current condition. He will consider the Galacians to be invaders (and rightly so) and will do all in his power to stop them.

Molderson is a man in his mid-forties, still in good shape, with only a few gray hairs. He has a short, neatly trimmed beard and piercing gray eyes.

Level: Veteran.

Skills: As per Veteran NPC. Heavy Weapons 2, Leadership 5, Navigation 7, Mechanic 2, Observation 4, Swimming 5, Small Arms (Pistol) 4, Vessel Use (Ship) 4, Vessel Use (Boat) 2, Willpower 3.

Initiative: 4.

Equipment: M9 with two clips.

Crewmembers (3): These two women and one man are experienced sailors and are all naval reserve enlisted personnel. They have served with Molderson for years and will follow his orders.

Level: Experienced.

Skills: As per Experienced NPCs,

plus Mechanic 2, Heavy Weapons 3, Melee Combat (Armed) 3, Navigation 1, Swimming 4, Vessel Use (Ship) 5, Vessel Use (Boat) 4.

Equipment: Knife.

Passengers (20 NPCs, plus the PC group): These are normal people who went out for a cruise and ended up in a nightmare. They may be employed in many ways. For example, some can serve as victims to demonstrate the cruelty of the Galacians, others can panic and foul up the PCs' plans, and some may even be able to aid the PCs.

Level: Novice.

Skills: As per Novice NPCs. Some might have certain specialized skills.

Equipment: Some may have cameras.

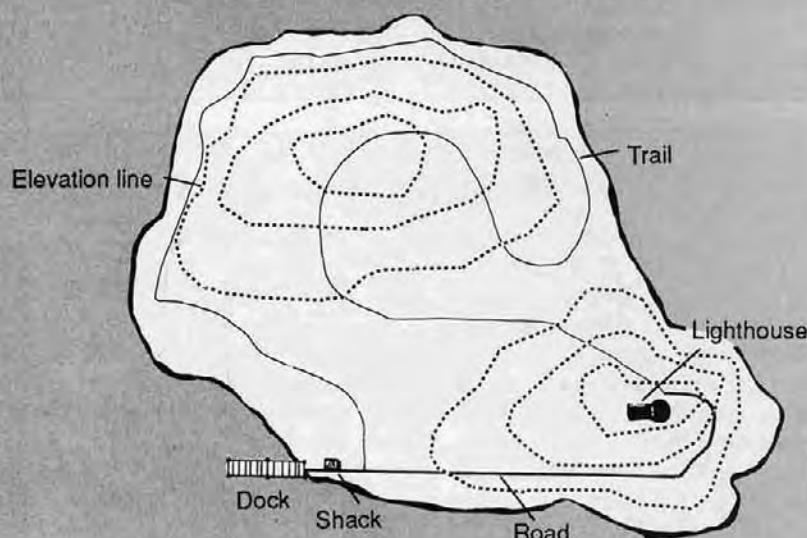
Harold Ramis: Ramis, a Maine native, is a former member of the US military who was badly injured during an attempted mutiny by his military unit (they were being used by their Dark Minion commanding officer as a Gestapo like force). He was the only survivor of the attempt and is convinced that the army is still looking for him (they aren't, but the Dark Minions are). With his perceived criminal status, his only option for employment was crime, and he has taken it up with military precision. Because of his past and his current occupation, he is extremely suspicious, almost paranoid. However, enough of his sense of decency remains that he will join with the PCs against the Galacians, providing he has a guaranteed escape route once it's all over. He may be willing to join the PCs, if they impress him.

Ramis is a tall, well-muscled man with numerous scars on his arms and chest and one on his face. He always looks as if he needs a shave. His outfit generally consists of a pair of worn jeans, old hiking boots, a camo shirt and a worn jean jacket.

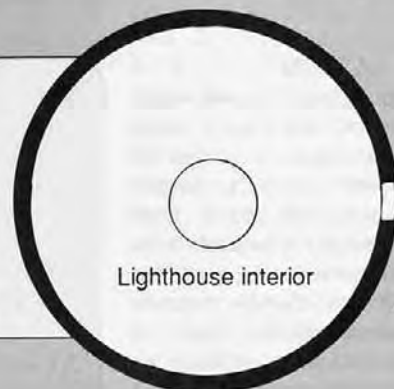
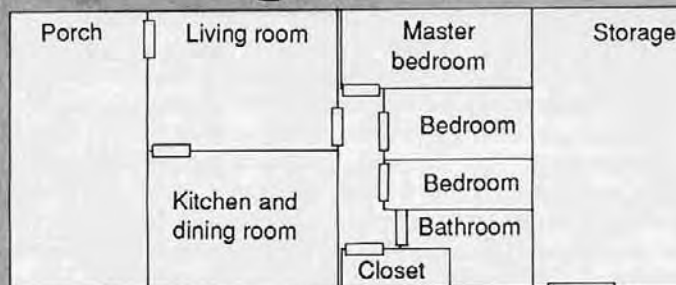
Level: Veteran.

Skills: Melee Combat (Armed) 6,

Baxter Island, Maine



Lighthouse



Air Disk

Air Disk: This device is basically a small "flying saucer" that is driven by an advanced, but conventional, battery-power system. Lift is provided by small, high-powered air jets. The control systems are very simple and can be easily handled by a human, though they are a bit oversized. An air disk is designed to carry one Galacian and his equipment. Because Galacians are much heavier and larger than humans, an air disk can transport up to four humans, provided their weight does not exceed the capacity of the disk.

Cruise Speed: 35

Com Move: 5

Fuel Cap: 50

Fuel Cons: 5

Price: N/A (—/—)

Night Vision: None

Fuel Type: Advanced Battery

Load: 300 kg (-10% speed per additional 30 kg)

Veh. Wt.: 300 kg

Crew: 1 Galacian (or 300 kg of humans)

Armament: None

Ammo: N/A

Min. Runway, Takeoff: 0 m

Min. Runway, Land: 0 m

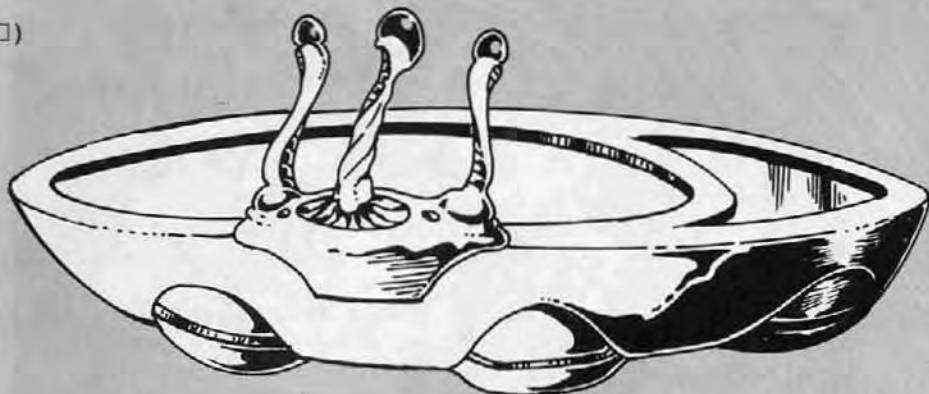
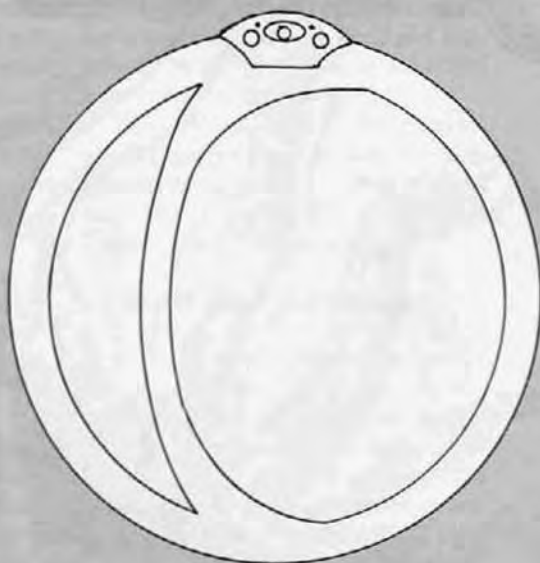
Damage Record

Crewmembers: Pilot ☐

(Human Pilot ☐)

(Human Passengers: 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐)

Engine: ☐



Small Arms (Pistol) 6, Small Arms (Rifle) 6, Swimming 1, Vessel Use (Boat) 6, Streetwise 6, Computer Operation 2, Leadership 4.

Initiative: 4.

Equipment: Desert Eagle (.44) with two clips, Uzi with two 32-round box magazines, combat knife.

Drug Runners (2): Ben Wisman ("Benny"), Alice Thompson ("Viper") These two (a man and a woman) were recruited by Ramis from the Hell Hounds gang in New York City. They are rather brutal individuals and are adept at personal violence. They respect and fear Ramis and will obey his orders.

Level: Experienced.

Skills: As per experienced NPCs, plus Stealth 6, Streetwise 7 and Vessel Use (Boat) 2.

Equipment: AKR with two magazines, combat knife.

WEAPONRY

The Galacians employ a variety of weapons that are different in appearance than human weapons, but are very similar in function. A human using these weapons (or a Galacian using a human-hand weapon) uses them at one skill level lower than normal due to their different size and slightly different configuration (Galacians are larger and use two eyes to aim, unlike humans, who

use one). These weapons are as follows:

Handgun: Treat as a .44 magnum Desert Eagle.

Rifle: Treat as a XM7 Storm Gun.

Rocket Launcher: Treat as a LAW 80.

Six of the Galacians are armed with rifles and handguns, while two are armed with handguns and rocket launchers. The warrior Galacians (these Galacians are actually medical personnel in charge of the hibernating ones) are equipped with actual DarkTek, supplied by their Dark Lord. The support personnel, however, retained standard weaponry due to the current scarcity of DarkTek. Ω

DANCE of DEATH

A Call of Cthulhu
adventure by J.B. Hill

Investigators who believe they face a vampire expect a mature gent in a black cloak, and usually arm themselves with wooden stakes and garlic. Unfortunately for them, this is not one of those stories.

A friend has disappeared. In this scenario, she is a journalist by the name of June Kelly, but the keeper may substitute any NPC known to the investigators. The adventure can be set in either the 1920s or modern day and in any location, although a city with a large Italian or Irish immigrant population is preferable.

Kelly is the type of journalist who specializes in unusual stories of the supernatural or the occult, travelling great distances to look into reports of ghosts, hauntings and any other strange happenings. She has not been seen or heard from for over a week now. If the investigators enter her flat, either legally or illegally, they will find a list of events she considered worthy of investigation. Each will have a newspaper clipping, letter or other notes attached. The keeper may invent any red herrings he wishes to the list for the investigators to research:

1. Car driver forced off road by ghost car. Phantom saloon causes accident. (This is really a drunk driver who cannot think of any better story to explain why he crashed.)

2. Devil's footsteps cross garden. Hoof marks in flower bed. (This is really a practical joke played by students.)

3. Suicide woman's ghost returns home. Devil woman seen in house. (This story is genuine. It occurs four days before the vampire story, below. The additional notes state that Mary Wilson saw her neighbor, Pat Bibby, return to her house the night after her funeral. She had hanged herself. On a pad by Kelly's telephone is the number of the nearby Falcon Hotel.)

4. Devil dog attacks child. Boy bitten by black dog with glowing eyes. (This is really a frightened child attacked by a Rottweiler.)

5. Vampire attacks pet animals. (This story is genuine. It occurs four days after the ghost story above and in the



same city, only half a mile from the ghost story location. The notes state that several residents in that area have had pet dogs and cats attacked and had blood sucked from them.)

FALCON HOTEL

A visit or call to the Falcon Hotel confirms that Kelly did register at the hotel, but after two days, she failed to return, leaving all her clothes, books, notes and possessions in the room. They have now been moved to a storage room. If the outstanding room rent is paid, the books and notes will be handed over. The books include a dictionary, a book on classical mythology and one on traditional mythology. Each has a paper slip in it. There are also further notes:

"Saw M. Wilson—seems genuine. Entered Bibby house—hanged—dancing. This may be more serious than first thought—must see priest." Wilson's address is also here.

MARY WILSON

Mary Wilson is an honest-looking woman in her sixties. She can give the following information:

Bibby was a typist, poor but honest. She had been married to an Italian sailor, but he deserted her. He was really a bad man. Bibby was a Catholic. On the day of her death—a Saturday—Wilson saw Bibby when a parcel was delivered to her. Later, she had seemed very happy. Wilson had seen her dancing in her house—it was a strange sort of jig—all jerky movements. On Monday morning, the police came around and found that she had hanged herself on Saturday night. The funeral was on Thursday at Our Lady of Grace—Father O'Brian held it. Wilson doesn't know where the burial was, but as a suicide, it would not be on sacred land. That night, she saw Bibby walk up to the house and enter it: As large as life, the dead woman went back to the house. Wilson is positive it was her. Twenty minutes later, the ghost left the house again. Wilson also remembers Kelly asking about it all. Kelly was interested in the dancing and the church.

BIBBY HOUSE

Bibby's house is easily entered via the back door. Kelly removed the boarding put up after the police broke in here. The contents are poor but clean. In the lounge is a picture of the Virgin Mary, and over the bed hangs a crucifix. In the hall hangs a rope from the ceiling, with a chair on its side beneath. In the lounge, a Spot Hidden roll reveals a wooden

box approximately 15 cm square with brown wrappings. These have Bibby's address, Italian stamps and a postage stamp from Taranto, Italy. The box has air holes drilled in it and is lined with silky gossamer material with a central spherical depression as if something fragile had been contained. Close examination also reveals some very small crystals. Analysis shows them to be crystals of uric acid (they are excreted by spiders).

FATHER PATRICK O'BRIAN

Bibby was poor but honest, a member of his church. She was 48 years old, and Bibby was her maiden name. She knew suicide was a mortal sin. Her office called the police when she failed to show up at work on the Monday morning after her death. She had been deserted by her husband, an evil and ungodly man. He had come from Southern Italy but was no longer Catholic. Her death was a great shock and had no apparent reason. O'Brian conducted the funeral. As a suicide, Bibby could not be buried in sanctified land. Her grave is in the grounds of the house of the Sisters of Mercy, who made all the necessary arrangements. O'Brian has not visited the Sisters since, but is due to make a routine call tomorrow. If asked about other injuries, he will remember that Bibby had a puncture wound on her right wrist. If asked about vampires, he knows that three foolish parishioners claim that their pets (two cats and a dog) have had blood sucked from them. This is in the area immediately around the house of the Sisters of Mercy. O'Brian has bigger problems to worry about. The O'Connors' toddler—a child of three years—went missing last night.

SISTERS OF MERCY

This is not a religious order but a charitable organization devoted to aiding the sick and relieving the poor and destitute. They are referred to as "sisters," but the head of each house is a matron, not a Mother Superior. The sisters are usually young Irish Catholic girls who wish to help the needy and train to become nurses without becoming nuns. They have houses in many large cities.

If the investigators visit the Sisters' house before or with Father O'Brian, he will be killed during his visit. If they delay for more than two days, they will see a newspaper headline: "Priest Missing."

RESEARCH MATERIAL Dictionary

Provide the investigators with a real dictionary.

Tarantella, -elle (n). Rapid whirling Italian dance once held to be cure for tarantism.

Tarantism (n). Dancing mania, especially that originating in Southern Italy among those who believe they had been bitten by the tarantula.

Tarantula (n). Large spider of Southern Europe whose bite was formerly held to cause tarantism; other kinds of large spider especially found near Taranto in Italy, where it abounds.

Books on Natural History

Tarantula, or tarentula. A family of large, hairy Arachnids of the suborder Orthognatha (Mygalomorpha). An extremely ancient suborder who mainly construct subterranean burrows. While the males only survive one year, the females often live upward of 20 years. They appear to be highly intelligent and are often kept as pets—the red-kneed tarantula being especially popular. Other species are very venomous, producing a strong neurotoxin which causes severe pain and muscle cramps which can lead to either paralysis or to hypertension and a twitching or "dancing" motion. Fatalities are recorded among children, although most victims can recover within a few weeks without permanent injury. The spider is carnivorous or haemovorous, sucking blood and body fluids from its victim.

Any Book on Classical Mythology

Arachne. A Lydian maiden, daughter of Idmon, a famous dyer in purple. She excelled in the art of weaving and challenged Athena to compete with her. The goddess tore her cloth after finding no fault in it, and Arachne killed herself. Athena made her immortal, but changed the rope into a cobweb and Arachne into a spider.

Any Book on Traditional Mythology

Vampires. Traditional blood-sucking corpses of the dead. It is often believed that only suicides can become vampires. The stake through the heart beloved of films and Gothic novels will not destroy a vampire. By tradition, the head must be removed and destroyed. Some traditions also advise that when dealing with the undead, the mouth should be sown up with thread.

Very Rare Mythos Books (especially the Book of Elbon)

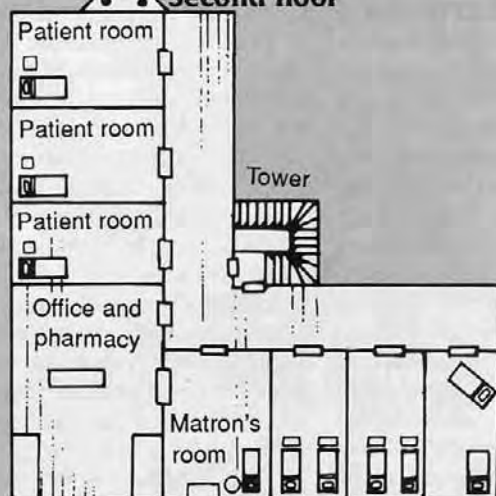
Attach-Nacha. An ancient god resembling a huge spider. It lives underground and is eternally spinning a huge

House of the Sisters of Mercy

Top of Tower

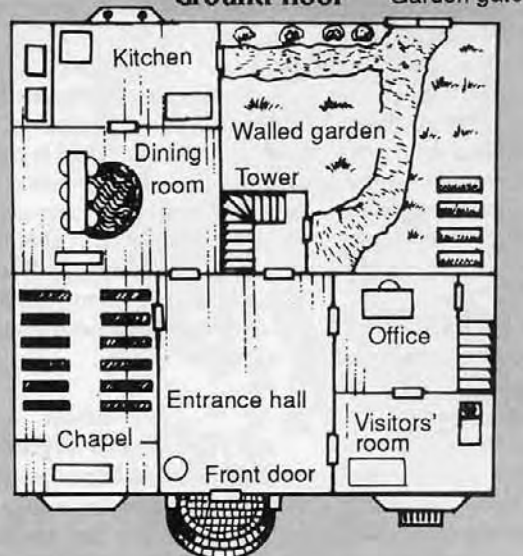


Second floor



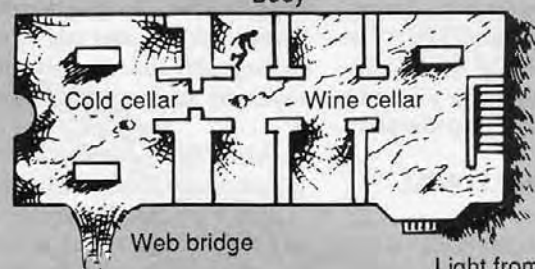
Sisters' room

Ground floor



Cellars

Body



bridge. It is worshiped by earth spiders, and there have been limited human cults in Turkey, Southern Italy, and Rumania. (Dance appears to have some significance in the worship.) Its worship is extremely ancient, and some believe it is the same spider god known as Zath and worshiped in the city of Yesud in Zamora in the Hyborian Age, an area which roughly equals the modern Carpathian mountains of Transylvania. The worship of Zath involves many dancing maidens.

THE HOUSE OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY

In the enclosed rear garden are four graves. These are quite old. The most recent has been dug up. There is fresh soil and two spades nearby. The cheap coffin is empty. The headstone reads "Patricia Ann Bibby RIP 1944-1992" (amend the date for a 1920s scenario).

All the rooms in the house are clean and neat, except for the abnormal quantity of cobwebs, which seem to cover the whole house.

Entrance Hall: A sister hangs by her neck from a rope from the ceiling. A tarantula hides nearby. If Father O'Brian visited before the investigators, his body lies on the floor. There are fingerprints deep in his throat, and a puncture wound in his throat and a puncture wound in his neck. He died of a heart attack.

Visitors' Room: The body of a three-year-old child lies here. It is drained of blood, with several puncture wounds.

Offices: A Spot roll or a specifically declared look reveals a rope tied to a ceiling beam. It has been cut through a few inches down. The door to the cellar is in here.

Kitchen: Two more sisters hang by the neck from ropes. Two tarantulas hide nearby.

Chapel: On the altar lies a body. It is tied to the altar by a web of fine silk threads. It has numerous puncture wounds over the neck and shoulders, and has been sucked dry over a number of days. Investigators recognize the body as Kelly (San 1 on 1D6). Ten tarantulas hide in here.

Dining Room: A dead cat in here has been drained of blood.

Second Floor Office and Pharmacy: Empty except for first aid equipment.

Patient Rooms: Each bedroom contains a bed with one elderly patient the sisters were nursing. All are dead with puncture wounds in their necks.

Matron's Room: Like each sister's room, it has a bed, locker, dressing table, personal effects and a Bible.

Sisters' Rooms: There are two single beds in each room. In the center room is a dead sister drained of blood and covered in cobwebs. One tarantula hides in here.

In the last room hides surviving Sister Mary Ruth. She has barricaded the door with her bed and locker. Mary Ruth is weak from hunger and almost insane through fear (SAN 2). Successful Oratory and Psychology rolls will reveal her story (Fast Talk or Debate will lead to automatic failure).

She will tell of Bibby's funeral, then of one of the sisters seeing her ghost enter the garden through the rear gate and enter the house. Matron ordered the grave dug up. The coffin was empty. Matron went down into the cellars, and when she came back up, she was ill—doing a strange dance. Matron then hanged herself in her office. The sisters cut her down, but then Matron came back from the dead.

Then Mary Ruth fled to her room, barricading herself in. Since then, she has heard intermittent screams from various parts of the house and clawing at her door. With much care and psychoanalysis, Sister Ruth will eventually make a complete recovery and become a nun.

Attic: This is used for storage. It is dusty, but nothing of importance is in here.

Cellars: The cellars are very dark and musty-smelling. There are considerably more cobwebs here.

Above the cellar steps, five tarantulas hide to drop on intruders.

Down here are the bodies of Pat Bibby and Matron. Both are undead servants of Atlach-Nacha. Bibby is slender and dressed in a shroud. Cobwebs cover her hair and body. Her eyes bulge, and her mouth hangs open. A trickle of fresh blood can be seen on her chin. Matron is dressed in her uniform. Around her neck, she still wears the noose she hanged herself with. She also has bulging eyes and an open mouth. The Sanity cost of seeing each of these undead is 1D4/1D8. Also in the cellar is the body of the last sister. She is so covered in cobwebs as to be almost cocooned. She has been dangerously drained of blood and, although still alive, is beyond saving. She is also insane by now.

At one point is a complicated web over the wall. It is possible to pass into the web. This costs 6 Magic points. On the far side, investigators find themselves standing on a web bridge-like construction which spans an area of interdimensional hyperspace. (SAN

loss 1D6/1D12). If the player characters stay there, Atlach-Nacha approaches them after 1D20 rounds. The bridge is far incomplete, and the spider god will not pass through the web gate until his bridge is finished.

It drains another 6 Magic points to pass back through the gate. The web gate is very easy to destroy from the cellar side—the investigators need merely tear the web up. But they must destroy Bibby and Matron first.

TARANTULA (MYGALOMORPHA) (LESSER INDEPENDENT RACE)

STR 1
CON 3
SIZ 1
POW 12
DEX 8
HP 2
INT 12+1D6

Movement: Climb (any surface) 3, jump 4, scuttle (1 move only) 6.

Spells: Create Servant of Atlach-Nacha.

Skills: Hide 90%, Detect Movement via Webs 10%.

Fangs: 60%, venom (see special rules), suck 1 HP blood a round.

Venom: The spider can at will use its venom either to paralyze or to create a servant of Atlach-Nacha. Its strength is 12 plus a factor dictated by the location of the "bite" (actually, spiders do not bite): leg=12+2=14; lower body or arms=12+4=16; head, neck, upper body=12+6=18.

However, extreme physical activity on the part of the victim, such as performing a whirling dance (the tarantella), will disrupt the venom and halve its strength.

SERVANT OF ATLACH-NACHA

This monster consists of two parts: a large tarantula spider and an undead zombie-like host. In its normal condition, the spider inhabits the host's mouth, controlling all its body movements. First, the tarantula "bites" the victim, but the venom attacks only the arachnoid membrane—a cobweb-like structure which covers the brain, spinal cord and back of the eye. As the venom infiltrates the membrane, the victim is subject to uncontrollable twitching and jerking spasms which resemble a strange dance. This "dance of death" lasts as many rounds as the victim has CON points. When the membrane is fully penetrated, the spider has limited control—it now forces the victims to kill themselves. This must be a suicide by

hanging. The victim then becomes an undead zombie. The spider crawls into the victim's mouth and gains full control over its host via the envenomed membrane, which it connects to its own silk. The spider controls all the body's movements, including the ability to see through the zombie's eyes. If the spider leaves the victim's mouth, it has only limited control, but can summon the zombie to come to it. The zombie host is extremely strong and resistant to damage—all gun shots do minimal damage.

They have two special forms of attack:

- The zombie can open its mouth and the spider leap on a victim. The zombie remains stationary until re-entered. This attack always commands a first initiative and is at 60%.

- The zombie can grip the victim by the throat with its hands on a successful grapple. The hands and the arms are then locked, and the spider can crawl out of the mouth, down the arms, and bite the victim's throat. This takes one round and is successful unless the spider is successfully engaged in that one round. The attack also causes a 1D6 SAN loss.

PAT BIBBY UNDEAD SERVANT OF ATLACH-NACHA

STR 20
CON 12
SIZ 5
HP 18
INT 17 (spider)
Move 5
Grapple 40%

MATRON UNDEAD SERVANT OF ATLACH-NACHA

STR 24
CON 16
SIZ 11
HP 20
INT 8 (spider)
Move 4
Grapple 30%

REWARDS

1D8 for destroying each servant.
1D6 for rescuing Sister Mary Ruth.
1D20 for destroying the web gate.

Anyone suffering insanity will subsequently suffer from arachnophobia—a fear of spiders—and possibly sciophobia—a fear of shadows. Ω

For further adventure, don't miss "Momento Mori" by J.B. Hill in Challenge 74.



Action/Reaction

A Dark Conspiracy adventure by Christopher Ziegler

PCs usually spend their minion hunting days searching out evil, and then blowing that evil into tiny little pieces. They go to the problem and eliminate it. But this time, the problem is coming to them.

Run this adventure preferably right after your characters are finishing off another adventure. They will be low on ammo, probably wounded in some way, and certainly not prepared to deal with a terror campaign against them. This adventure also becomes much more thrilling if it takes place at night.

The PCs are heading home after another successful mission against the forces of evil. They probably split up into small groups or go off alone back to their homes. Now that each character is isolated, the assassins strike.

If the character lives in an apartment or other structure, he will be attacked by two stalkers (**Dark Races**, page 86). Stalkers are used for assassination operations by Dark Lords, and do their job extremely well. When the PC opens the door and flips the switch, nothing happens. His room is dark. No matter how much fiddling with the light, nothing will happen. Make a Difficult: Foreboding roll. If successful, the character will sense something in the room with him, just before the door closes—and locks. From the outside. If unsuccessful, the PC probably pulls out a flashlight and makes his way over to the fuse box. Then the flashlight sparks and goes out. Maybe the character steals a glimpse of an inky black claw smashing the bulb with a silvery black dagger, just before the door closes and locks.

Now the PC is locked in his room,

in near-total darkness. He should be terrified, or at least apprehensive, as he has no idea what he is dealing with. Enhance the atmosphere by telling the PC that the only sound is his own frantic breathing. The stalkers choose that moment to attack.

The stalkers will attempt to kill the PC silently and quickly, using their darkness daggers to murder their foe. This will be a desperate fight for the PC, as firearms will be more of a liability than an asset. Remember, the PC can barely see what he's shooting at, so most shots will hit the furniture (unless he has a starlite scope or other vision device, in which case he will see the stalkers clearly). This will be a melee fight, with knives and fists. The PC will probably win, as there are only two stalkers, and the character may be able to get in a lucky shot with a pistol. If either stalker is seriously wounded, they will both use Dimension Walk to escape, leaving the character bloody, bruised, and shaken.

ATTACK OR ENTRENCH

When contacting the rest of the survivors, the PCs will find that everyone else was attacked. This was not a random incident. The Dark Lords have noticed this particular group of humans has a habit of ruining Dark operations. Their first successes could be flukes, but now the Dark Lords are convinced it is deliberate. So the Dark Ones sent an assassination team of stalkers combined with a few loyal humans to make sure the PCs never interfere with them again.

The characters will likely be worried now. What should they do? Most PCs will be confused about being on the receiving end of an attack and will act accordingly. Popular opinion usually will run to entrenching, get-

ting everyone together and poking guns out of windows. Any PC with antiterrorism experience will realize this is not a good idea, as it would provide the enemy with a fixed target to destroy at leisure. If the characters insist on this, their building will be hit by an RPG fired by an Igor as he jumps into a car and scurries away. He will lead the party on a merry chase through the city (make many Vehicle Use (Wheeled Vehicle) rolls to keep up with him) and eventually to the old Manchester Street Parking Garage. See Stand Up and Fight Like a Minion, below.

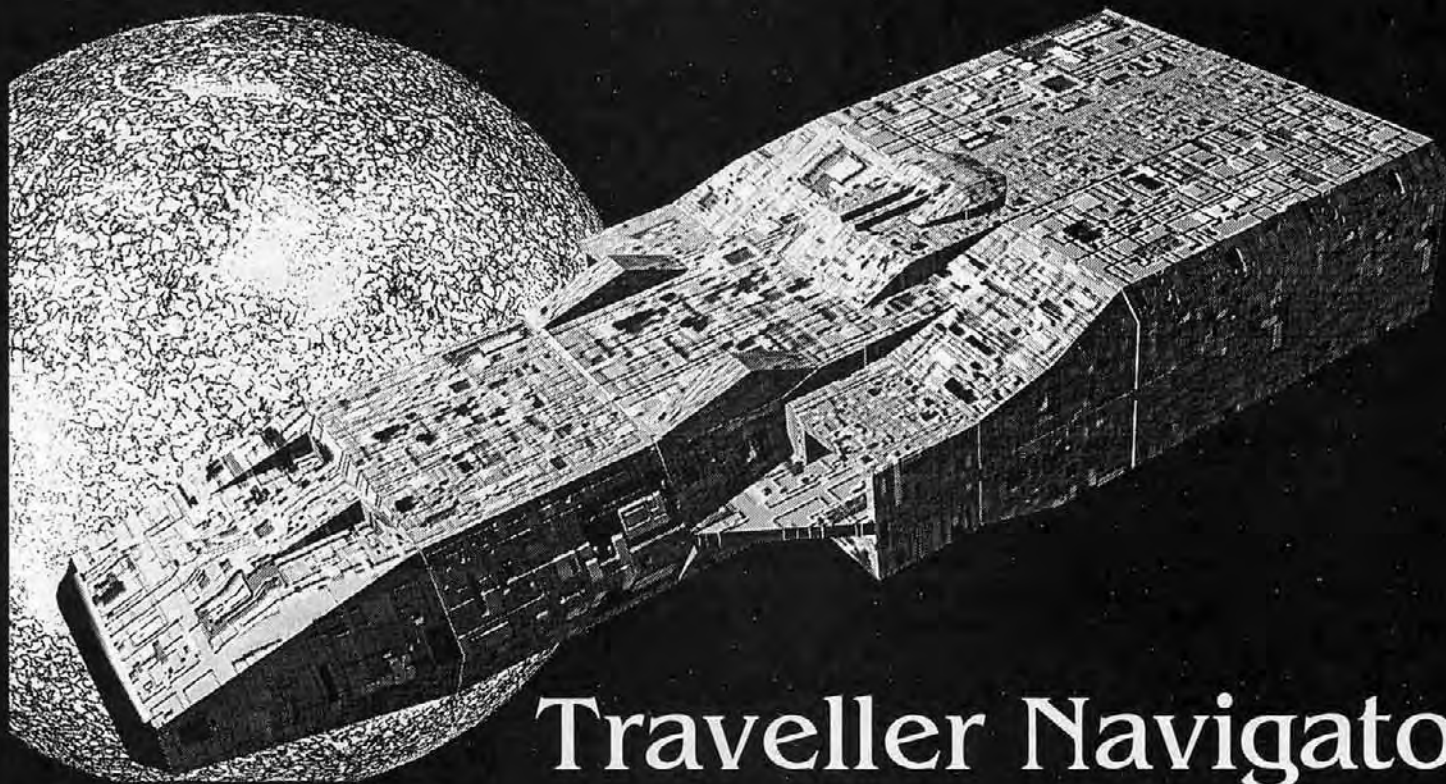
If the characters decide to rove around together looking for their would-be assassins, they will find nothing. They have no idea what to look for or where to look. Have everyone make an Average: Observation roll to discover that a car has been following them since they left. It makes no hostile actions toward them but merely follows them no matter where they head. Driving rolls may be made to shake the trail. When the PCs stop, the car speeds up and drives past. PCs recording and checking the license number find that the car was destroyed in the 2004 collapse of the Manchester Street Parking Garage. If the PCs decide to check out the garage, see Stand Up and Fight Like a Minion, below. Nothing more will happen until night.

THEY'RE BACK

The PCs will be attacked at night again, whether they are alone or in a group. They will be attacked by two stalkers if alone and by 1D6 stalkers if grouped. In addition, a human Igor will accompany them, armed with a tranquilizer gun. While the stalkers keep everyone busy fighting in the dark, the Igor will discreetly tranquil-

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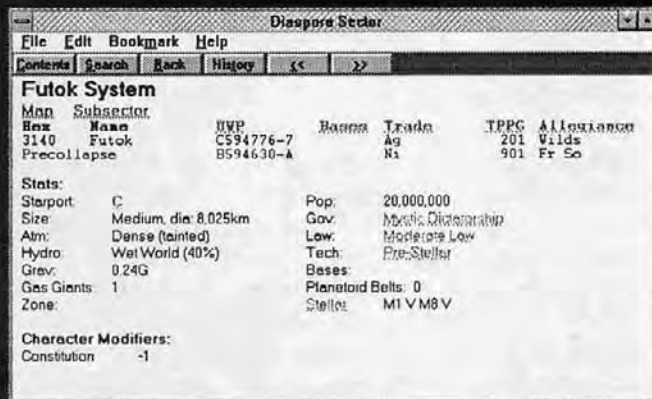
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ize a key NPC or a special PC and haul him out to his car (which, incidentally, is the same one that has been following them). The stalkers will continue fighting until one is seriously wounded, and they will then use Dimension Walk to disappear. Now the characters notice that one of their number is missing.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO TRACE THIS CALL...

As the characters decide what to do next, the phone rings. The character answering hears a chilling, bone-grating voice rasp, "If you ever want to see (missing PC or NPC) again, come to the Manchester Parking Garage at midnight...or else." The caller laughs and hangs up quickly. So, of course, the PCs gear up and march outside to head for the parking garage. But the stalkers are not stupid. The key element of victory is defining the battle on your own terms, and the stalkers adhere fiercely to that principle. Instead of allowing the characters to catch them in the garage in a stand-up-shoot-em-up battle that they will almost certainly lose, the stalkers will attack the characters when they are at their least ready—the moment they set foot out their door.

The PCs will be attacked by two stalkers who wait until their Igor across the street starts firing. The Igor is armed with an Uzi with five clips. Once the PCs start to shoot at him, the stalkers will leap on them from behind. The stalkers will fight only until the PCs manage to shoot one of their number, then they will flee. The Igor, if not dead, will jump into his car and speed off—right toward the Manchester Street Parking Garage.

STAND UP AND FIGHT LIKE A MINION

The stalkers' plans have gone somewhat awry. They had planned to get rid of the characters already, but now have decided the PCs are too powerful. The stalkers are planning to report back to their respective Dark Lord, but they have one more trick they will try.

By now, the characters should be zooming off to the garage. Whether



Stalkers

Strength: 12	Education: 1	Move: 3/10/20/35
Constitution: 8	Charisma: 1	Skill/Dam: 5/7 or by dagger
Agility: 10	Empathy: 6	Hits: 20/30
Intelligence: 6	Initiative: 5	Appear: There are 1D8+2 total stalkers in the mission

For more details on stalkers, see **Dark Races Sourcebook**, pages 86-87.

Igors

As stock NPCs, **Dark Conspiracy**, page 176. There are as many Igors as PCs. Two have Vehicle Use (Wheeled Vehicle) at level 6. They are armed with Uzis, .45s and knives.



Darkness Daggers

The favorite weapon of the stalkers, the darkness dagger penetrates armor as if it didn't exist to inflict piercing wounds. It has a short armed melee range, +2 to-hit modifier and does 1D10+1/2 STR damage.

Stalkers are immune to fire, lightning, oxygen-deprivation or poison. It is one level more difficult to hit a stalker in poor light, which is why they're always attacking at night. For more details on the stalker weapons, see **Dark Races Sourcebook**, pages 86-87.

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they're following the Igor or desperately trying to save their friend, they're driving right into the stalkers' final trap.

Built in 1997 during a lean construction period but an explosive commuter era, the Manchester Street Parking Garage was destined to fail from the beginning. Shoddy workmanship, poor materials and inept planning combined to make the structure extremely hazardous. On March 13, 2004, the structure collapsed right in the middle of rush hour, killing hundreds. The cause of collapse was never proven, despite rumors of sabotage and terrorism. It is also interesting to note that March 13 was a Friday. Whatever the cause, the collapse was a disaster. The building was judged too unstable to enter. Paramedics and EMT teams risked their own lives anyway looking for a way in, but no openings were to be found. So they simply waited outside, hearing the anguished screams and pleas for rescue that filtered out for hours. The eerie glow from the fires inside created a hellish spectacle. After 24 hours, the property was condemned, and no teams were ever sent in to retrieve bodies or look for survivors. The entire area around the ruin collapsed financially as residents flocked to more pleasant parts of town. Manchester Street soon became an Anthill. Those living there say they still hear the screams of those who were crushed and burned while rescuers stood helpless outside.

The PCs should know all this, and the depression in the area is almost palpable as the characters speed toward it. Finally, there it looms. It is not hard to imagine the abhorrent sight that night in 2004. But the PCs can see a glimmer of light from deep within the structure, and the Igor who abandons his car and scuttles toward a tiny crack that would have gone unnoticed. PCs can follow him in, in which case he will fight, or choose their own way toward the beckoning pinpoint of light. The structure settles and creaks as they clamber around inside. Perhaps truly evil referees could have someone come across a charred skeleton, frozen in

an eternal scream. No matter what route, the PCs find the source of the light. A cavern formed when the upper deck crashed down at an angle on the lower. The site is ringed with smashed and broken cars, skeletons hiding underneath them. The entire area is fire-blackened, and a faint charnel stench lingers. Coupled with the constant threat of collapse, this should make even the most hardened characters claustrophobic!

Their friend is hanging upside-down over a hole in the floor that seems to go down for miles. A vile smell wafts up from this pit. The light is a pulsing blue gateway, in front of which the remaining stalkers are standing, along with all their Igor servants. The stalkers will fight the PCs one last time, inflicting as much damage as possible, then stepping back toward the gate. One salutes the PCs, and all the remaining stalkers slip through the gate. The dimensional portal slips shut behind them. The PCs and the Igors are left to fight it out. Or so they thought.

DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN

As soon as the last stalker is safely through the gate, the Igors draw their weapons. But the would-be firefight is interrupted by an ominous rumbling noise. Dust sifts down from the ceiling, and the loose objects shake. Then, ever so slowly at first, chunks of the concrete ceiling start to fall. The Igors look at each other in terror and run for the exit. Unfortunately, it collapses just as they are going through. It seems the rest of the garage will soon follow suit.

The party should be in a frenzy now, with a 20-year-old ruin collapsing in on them, surrounded by those who died violent deaths, and their friend hanging over a stinking,

seemingly bottomless pit. In actuality, the pit is the only exit remaining. It is a 20-foot drop to the bottom, but the rope the prisoner is hanging on will, if unwound, reach to the bottom. PCs may lower themselves down, but quickly, as the garage is rapidly going to pieces. Once at the ground below, they find themselves in a sewer leading for miles. To hurry them along, perhaps some rubble may fall down the shaft, nearly striking them. The characters can drag themselves along the sewers until they find a ladder, which will let them up into the open air. Those evil referees can spoil the moment of triumph by having them covered with leeches.

AFTERMATH

Though the PCs have fought off the assassins for now, they ultimately have put themselves in greater danger. The Dark Lords are now certain of the PCs' involvement, and next time, they will send something they feel is capable of making the PCs' lives miserable—if short. Until then, the PCs can go back to fighting the Dark Ones, but maybe, just maybe, a little less sure of themselves. Ω

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"And of course, there are other ways to collect. Like you, for instance. You want rid of the vampire that's taking your people. Well, you know my price. Too much? Well that's okay. One thing I've learned from vampires is patience. I'm not going anywhere, and that vampire isn't going anywhere. But your people, now they're going somewhere.

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Attributes

Body: 4 (5)
Quickness: 4
Strength: 3
Charisma: 2
Intelligence: 3
Willpower: 5
Essence: 1.7
Reactions: 4 (8)

Skills

Bike: 3
Etiquette (Street): 3
Etiquette (Tribal): 3
Firearms: 4
Stealth: 6
Armed Combat: 5
Throw: 4
Tracking: 3
Data Tracking: 2
Projectile Weapons: 4

Cyberware: Cybereyes with low-light, thermographic imaging and flare protection, wired reflexes (2), datajack, dermal plating (1), retractable razors, low-frequency hearing.

Equipment: Monofilament whip, crossbow, crossbow quarrels with oak arrow heads, two wooden throwing daggers, armor jacket, Uzi 111 with explosive rounds, grenades (two flash, two explosive, one thermite), one stimulant patch (5), one trauma patch (5), Aurora racing bike.

Contacts: Gang-member, Tribesman, Street-Mage, Fixer, Decker.

Description: Tall and thin, and dressed all in black, he looks more like a vampire than a vampire does. He wears lots of jewelry in the form of religious symbols of all races. Ω

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► *The Edge of Memory*

By Matthew S. Prager



My agent, Bennie Dicker, hadn't really been able to set up the one of those "really hot" deals he's always talking about. I was beginning to think about having someone else shop my talents around when he came up with this job. "All you have to do is keep your eye on this sweet little thing for a couple of days," he says. "It's easy money."

But, you know, easy money is never that easy.

Some "sweet little thing." This woman was vicious. Not in a physical way, or she wouldn't have needed us, but you could see it in her eyes. She knew what she wanted and exactly how to get it.

There was something else I could see too—she was scared.

The PCs are offered short-term employment as bodyguards for Brigitte Gentry, described by their agent as an independent businesswoman. The job pays Lv200 a day for each PC, for a minimum of 14 days, plus expenses. Gentry has retained the option of continuing the employment for an unspecified time. She has also indicated a need for a cyberspace jockey and will require the PCs to find one for her if there is not one among their group.

Gentry will provide the following information about herself and her situation: She acts as a storage medium for clients who have sensitive information that needs to be kept in a place where it cannot be accessed. In order to do this, she has had herself wired with a gigabyte

of protected memory. Her clients download their information to her memory and set an access code. This memory is protected by a security program called Watchdog, and Gentry cannot access that portion of memory or override her security protocol. It is a very secure arrangement, and Gentry is paid well for her services, averaging Lv100 per megabyte of storage per day.

This service, as well as her other business dealings, have worked out well for Gentry over the last couple of years—that is, until now. Gentry is currently carrying a large block of information for Jase Skinner, a fairly experienced cyberjock. He arranged for Gentry to hold his goods while he looked for a buyer. But someone wasted Skinner in his apartment two days ago.

Now Gentry needs the PCs to find a secure place for her to stay, find a cyberjock who can unlock her protected memory so she can access the information there, and try to find out who killed Skinner and why.

REFEREE

Skinner lived in a high-security building, but whoever hit him walked in and out like there was nothing there. If the PCs try to access police records regarding the incident, they will learn that the cops think the job was done by corporate ninjas or some very high-level muscle. The coroner's report indicates that Skinner was injected with a neurotoxin and was in extreme pain for over 14 hours before he died. If the PCs manage to search Skinner's apartment, they will not be able to find any clue as to why he was killed or what he had in Gentry's memory.

Word on the street says Skinner was hit by the Yakuza and that they also have a contract out on Gentry. That explains why most of her friends and associates are avoiding her like the plague, as will friends of the PCs if they find out the PCs are working for Gentry.

OPTIONS

If and when access is gained to Gentry's protected memory, the PCs will be able to download about 750 megabytes of data that looks as if it was stolen from a Yakuza organization based in Bangkok.

The referee should decide exactly what information is in Gentry's memory. Use this to tie the scenario into your continuing campaign, or as a start to a future campaign. Some suggestions are:

- A large amount of corporate shares or money in an exclusive account.
- Embarrassing data on a Yakuza

boss who is cheating his superiors.

- Technical data on some new high-tech device or pharmaceutical.
- Information linking several world leaders to the organization.

There are a number of possibilities for this scenario, but all involve the PCs in a situation that requires them to do some investigation and then extricate themselves from a sticky predicament. Can they negotiate with the Yakuza to get the contract lifted? How much money can they make by selling the data they retrieved from Gentry?

The PCs should find it hard to move without being followed by the Yakuza. Use of credit or identification cards, etc. will pinpoint their whereabouts, and they will probably find some nasty fellows on their doorstep shortly thereafter.

BRIGITTE GENTRY

Gentry is a courier specializing in the transfer of information. She is an attractive woman of medium height and build, with auburn hair and green eyes. She is a Veteran administrator NPC with increased skills of Appraisal-3 and Bargain-3.

She has had a modified Subdermacomp implanted and wired to her neural pathways so she can control it with a thought. The unit has an internal chronograph, one gigabyte of protected memory, and an external I/O port, similar to a neural jack, located at the nape of her neck. She runs various business programs and a sophisticated security program at all times. Although this hardware allows her to interface with other computers, she cannot use it to manipulate items that are set up for a neural jack.

NPC Motivation Results: Club 3: Gentry is very confident and not easily intimidated or frightened, and she won't back down in a situation until satisfied with the outcome. Diamond 2: She is very shrewd when it comes to business, and you can bet she'll come out on top of any transactions.

SUBDERMACOMP ACCESSORIES
Neural Control Circuitry: The Subder-

macomp is normally controlled through various fluctuations and movements of its owner's hand. With the addition of this circuitry, the Subdermacomp is wired to the character's brain and can then be controlled by thought. Cost is Lv7500.

External I/O Port: Allows access to external computers, data sources and program chips. Similar in appearance to a neural jack, it is wired to an interface in the Subdermacomp. Cost is Lv3000 (a discount may be given if installed at the same time as the Subdermacomp).

Memory Expansion: A Subdermacomp's memory may be expanded up to one gigabyte. Cost is Lv1500 per 200-megabyte increment.

Watchdog: Watchdog is a program similar to the intrusion countermeasures programs run by mainframe computers in the matrix. It is designed to be run on portable computers as a TaSTAR (Terminate and STAY Resident) file. It does not affect the normal operation of the computer unless triggered, in this case by an attempt to access to another computer without the correct access code. If an attempt is made to access memory with a cyberdeck, Watchdog will combat the intrusion with the following statistics: Speed 5, Accuracy 3, Offense 7, Defense 9. Watchdog also has the same capabilities as the Fast Forward program. Ω

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W O R K

A CYBERPUNK 2.0.2.0. ADVENTURE MICHAEL C. LABOSSIERE

"Today's traffic report is brought to you by New American Autoworks, makers of the Ambernought, which is what you want hauling you out of a bad firefight. Sector Five of Route Twelve should still be considered a red zone due to continued nomad raiding and.... This just in: The Bender Memorial Bridge is closed off, apparently due to terrorist activity. Our traffic helicopter is taking small arms fire even as I speak, so find an alternate route, guys."

This adventure is intended for a group of police PCs, but can be modified to include other character types. The adventure begins with the seizure of a major bridge during rush hour by a terrorist-led boostergang. The terrorists seized the bridge by detonating charges on either end of the structure. These charges destroyed several vehicles and, more importantly, caused a massive pileup. The terrorists also took over the bridge's traffic tower and are using it as a command post. All in all, it is a nasty situation and one the PCs get to untangle.

Getting the PCs Involved: If the PCs are police, they will be assigned the task of dealing with the situation and will receive the following briefing:

Police Report: At (insert time), explo-

sive charges were detonated on either end of the Bender Memorial Bridge, resulting in a numerous accidents and preventing the people trapped on the bridge from leaving. People with car and portable phones have reported that a boostergang has moved in among them, and they are heavily armed and enhanced. Reports of murder, rape and robbery are constantly coming in. Many motorists are severely injured and are in need of medical attention. The motorists also report that the traffic tower has been seized, apparently by terrorists.

At (20 minutes after the charges went off), a group calling itself "Defenders of the Faith" broadcast a demand for \$10 million and safe transport out of the country. The group claimed that the bridge has been mined with explosives and will be destroyed if the demands are not met. This terrorist group has never been heard of previously.

Assignment: The rescuers are to retake the bridge as quickly as possible with a minimum of civilian casualties. They are fully authorized to use deadly force.

If the PCs are not police, they can be brought into the adventure in a variety of ways. For example, media teams can be assigned to cover the event; corporate solos can be brought in to rescue a trapped executive, and so on.

BRIDGE

This is an eight-lane "super bridge." At each end of the structure is a crater from the explosive charges, and around the crater are twisted wrecks of blown-up cars and shattered bodies. The lanes of the bridge are filled with vehicles. Most of them have crashed into one another, and the area is a horrible, tangled mess. In several places, cars are burning, and an occasional explosion will occur. If this were not bad enough, the boosters are roaming among the vehicles and engaging in terrible behavior. They are shooting up vehicles, setting them on fire, and attacking people. People occasionally try to escape from their vehicles, but they are usually killed before they get far. Most of the motorists are in their vehicles, huddling in fear.

Some of the motorists are armed, and some of them will resist the boostergang members. These people may be of help to the police, if only in tying up the boosters. Those motorists with car phones and portable phones will be calling the police, and their calls will be handled by a team which will convey important information to the police.

TRAFFIC TOWER LOWER LEVEL

The traffic tower is run by the city's traffic police and is intended to provide the police with an observation post as well as an emergency aid station. Most large bridges have such towers on them as bridges have become a favored target of terrorists, other criminals and nutcases.

Road: The bridge surface.

Barrier: The concrete barrier that keeps motorists from ending up in the



river. The barrier here has an entrance with an armored door. The door has been blasted open.

Parking: A BMW 600 patrol cruiser and three Blue Knight police cycles are burning in the lot. A dead officer lies sprawled on the ground. The body has been stripped of weapons.

Tower Interior: The interior consists of a an elevator which goes up to the top of the tower (which is on 30-meter-high support pylons). The elevator is up. A ladder running along the side of the elevator shaft permits access to the observation station. The body of an officer lies on the floor, stripped of equipment. The storage room has been busted open and set on fire. It contained repair and medical equipment.

TRAFFIC TOWER UPPER LEVEL

The observation station contains the elevator, a small bathroom, and the monitoring stations. One station has been shot up, and one officer's body lies on the floor, stripped of weapons. The terrorists are using this area as their command post, and they will remain here unless they have an incentive to move. The portable computer controlling the bombs is set up on one of the stations and is monitored at all times. The bombs are linked by wires (radio would be too easy to jam).

The terrorists gained access to the tower by killing a rookie who had just been assigned to the tower, then one of them took her place. She then killed the other officer present and let her fellows in prior to the detonation of the charges.

ACTION/RESOLUTION

The boosters will spend their time wreaking havoc on the people stranded

on the bridge and shooting at anything that comes their way. The terrorists don't care what happens to the boosters and see them merely as something to keep the cops busy. They boosters are poorly organized and separated by the vehicles. The terrorists, however, are extremely well organized and will do their best to maintain control of the situation until their demands are met.

The boostergang is on a real "burn," and they will keep going until they are wiped out. The terrorists will keep going unless they believe they can't win. If they think they have lost, they will try to escape (by blending in with the motorists) and detonate the bridge from a safe distance. If they cannot escape, most will surrender, except Spender, who will definitely try to destroy the bridge if she is not killed. Since she doesn't know the detonation code, she will have to wire the bombs to a manual detonator. This will take her about five minutes. She will also have to fight off her former companions who don't want to die.

The faster the PCs can take out the terrorists, the faster Max-tac teams can move in to wipe out the boosters and bring in medics. If the PCs can do the job quickly, they will be media heroes (for a while). Those saved will also be grateful. If the PCs do poorly, they will be media fools. If the bridge is destroyed, they might as well turn in their badges and volunteer for dangerous experiments in the corporate sector because the press will crucify them (if they survive). If any boosters or terrorists survive, they may come looking for revenge later.

TYPICAL BOOSTER

Int: 5	Ref: 8	TECH: 4
Cool: 6	EMP: 1	ATTR: 3
LUCK: 4	MA: 7	BODY: 8/10

Skills: Combat Sense 3, Athletics 5, Dodge/Escap 6, Intimidate 6, Streetwise 4, Brawling 8, Awareness 7, Pistol 5, Rifle 6, Stealth 4, Melee Weapons 7.

Cyberware: Neuralware Processor, Smartgun Link, Grafted Muscles, Wolver, Cyberoptics with Targeting Scope and Infrared, Subdermal Armor, Cyberarm.

Weapons: Dai Lung Cybermag, smartchipped Kalishnikov heavy assault rifle, Kendaichi monoknife.

Description: These are psycho youths who live to cause pain and suffering, preferably using the most recent cybergear. They have no redeeming characteristics. There are 26 of them on the bridge.

JANET GEREK (SOLO)

Int: 8	Ref: 8/10	TECH: 5
Cool: 8	EMP: 2	ATTR: 7
LUCK: 7	MA: 7	BODY: 7/9

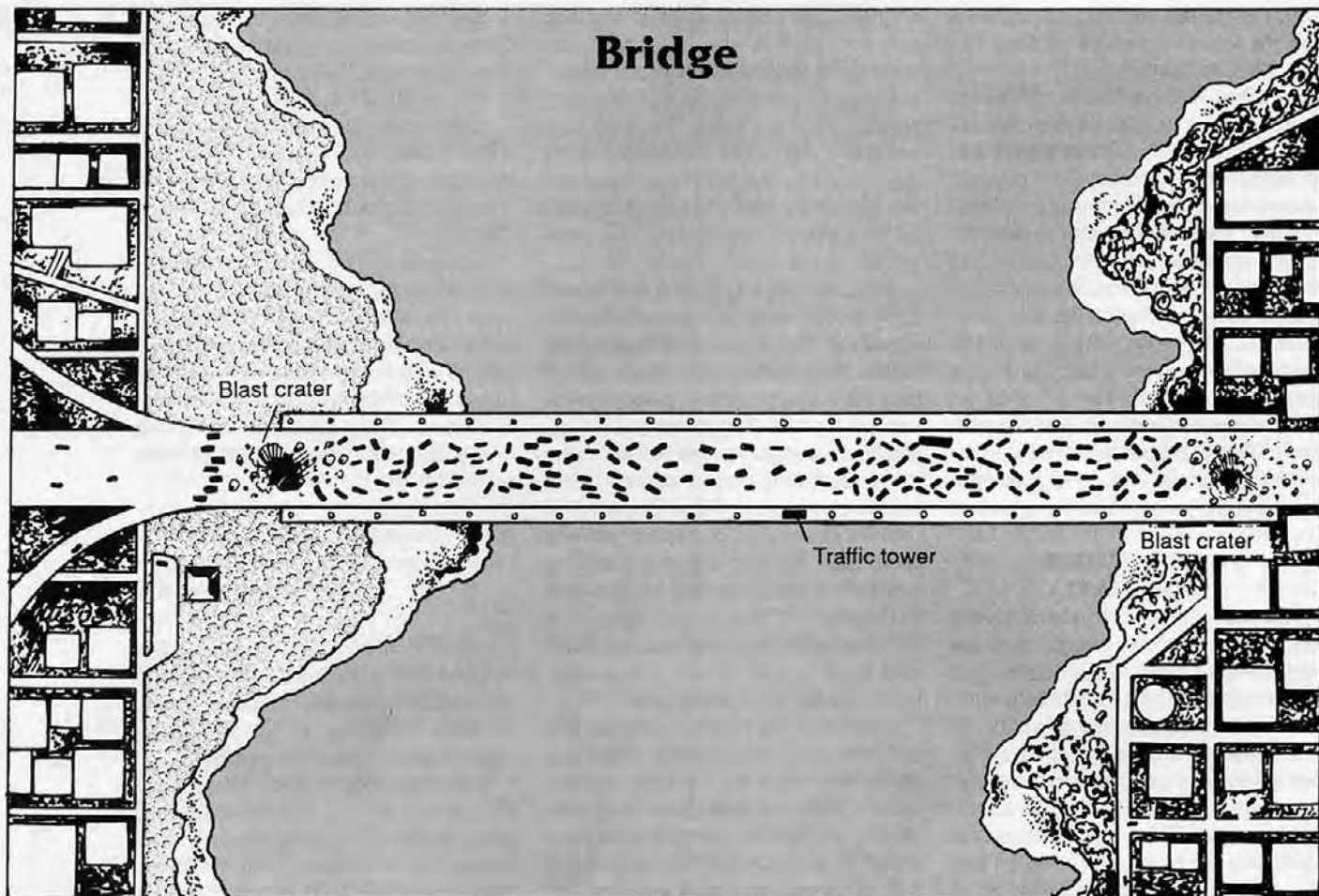
Skills: Combat Sense 7, Interrogation 4, Intimidate 8, Awareness 6, Leadership 4, Athletics 7, Karate 6, Pistol 5, Sub-machinegun 4, Rifle 7, Demolitions 3.

Cyberware: Biomonitor, Neuralware Processor, Kerenzikov Boosterware (+2), Interface Plugs, Muscle and Bone Lace, Skin Weave, Cybersnake, Cyberoptic (right) with targeting scope, teleoptics, Low Lite, cyberarm with reinforced joints.

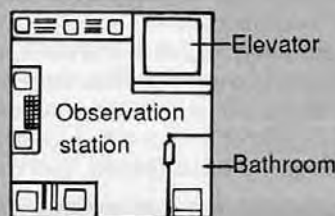
Weapons: Smartchipped Constitution Arms Hurricane assault weapon (*Protect and Serve*, page 33), smartchipped Armalite 44, Metal Gear body armor, headset radio.

Description: Gerek is a former corporate solo who went a bit nuts and had to be relieved from duty. She discovered religion, of a kind, in the form of 20th-century TV evangelism. She be-





Tower Upper Level



came convinced that God wanted her to get Him lots of money. She recovered from this (sort of), but decided that getting money was still a good idea, but she wanted to get it for herself. She is still a bit over the edge and is very violence prone. Her tinge of madness, combined with her powerful personality, enables her to scare the hell out of the boosters, so they obey her. She recruited them because they used to work for her during her corporate days. She is actually much crazier than she appears.

MELISSA SPENDER (SOLO) Terrorist

Int: 7 Ref: 7/8 TECH: 6
Cool: 8 EMP: 7 ATTR: 7
LUCK: 6 MA: 7 BODY: 7/9

Skills: Combat Sense 6, Awareness 6, Athletics 8, Karate 8, Pistol 6, Rifle 5, Demolitions 2, Persuasion and Fast Talk 5, Demolitions 6.

Cyberware: Neuralware Processor, Interface Plugs, Kerenzikov Boosterware, Muscle and Bone Lace, Rippers.

Weapons: Smartchipped ArmaLite 44, Smartchipped AKR-20 Medium Assault, Armored Jacket (SP=18).

Description: A long-time criminal who specialized in infiltrating groups in

order to steal, she took the place of the murdered officer, and her background in demolitions (which she was in the military) resulted her being in charge of the charges. Her goal in life is the acquisition of money, which she values more than anything except her life and her drugs. She is addicted to a variety of designer drugs and commits crimes primarily to support her habit. If the situation looks grim, she will put the police uniform back on and try to convince the PCs she was taken hostage by the terrorists. If this works, she will slip away at the first opportunity to detonate the bridge.

OTHER TERRORISTS (3)

Int: 5 Ref: 7 TECH: 6
Cool: 7 EMP: 5 ATTR: 5
LUCK: 6 MA: 7 BODY: 8

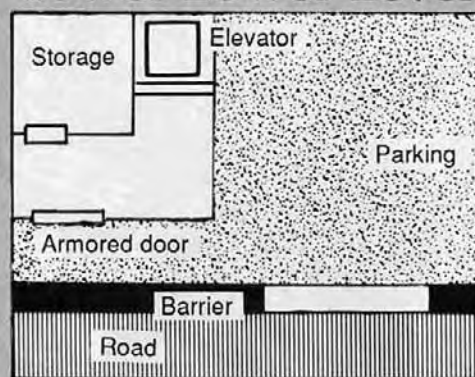
Skills: Combat Sense 6, Awareness 5, Athletics 5, Karate 4, Pistol 5, Submachinegun 5.

Cyberware: Neural Processor, Speedware (Sandevistan), Interface Plugs.

Weapons: Smartchipped Militech Arms Avenger, smartchipped H&K MPK-11.

Description: Hired criminals. They are in it for the money. Ω

Tower Lower Level



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Articles use three levels of headings (refer to past issues for examples). The first level is the article title. Next, any divisions within the article need *section headings*, which are all caps on their own line (like Subject Matter, below). Any further divisions within a section need *subsection headings*, which are upper and lower case, followed by a colon and text (like Format, above).

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SUBJECT MATTER

We will consider articles on any science-fiction roleplaying game by any publisher, including Twilight: 2000, Merc: 2000, Traveller, Dark Conspiracy, Space: 1889, 2300 AD, Shadowrun, Star Trek, Star Wars, BattleTech, High Colonies, Call of Cthulhu, Paranoia, Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0., Vampire, Werewolf and others. We will not provide coverage for any products produced by or licensed to Palladium Books, at the request of Palladium Books.

Adventure scenarios are preferred. Sourcebook-type articles should be combined with adventure ideas whenever possible. Game variants should be playtested in advance by you and be applicable to a broad range of gaming situations. Referee's notes should give hints to the referee on how to increase interest in the game, make his life easier or spark his imagination. In general, articles should be consistent with previously published information.

Twilight: 2000, Merc: 2000: Articles must be usable with Twilight: 2000 2nd edition or Merc: 2000. Ideas include an adventure situation with a geographical setting, short equipment descriptions, generic personalities or locations for use in a variety of situations, and examinations of modern military life or military equipment.

Traveller: All Traveller articles must be usable in the Traveller: The New Era universe. Include tasks and game statistics where appropriate. Ideas include an adventure with relevant background data, bestiary or short equipment description. Articles may follow either the "adventure nugget" or traditional Challenge format.

Space: 1889, 2300 AD, Others: Short adventures (2000-3000 words), plus a page or so of maps. See Twilight Encounters (a GDW supplement) for samples of the preferred format.

Reviews: Product reviews are not limited to the gaming systems normally covered in Challenge. Evaluations of science-fiction films (limited to recent releases on video, due to timeliness), novels and other products are also accepted. All reviews must include the approximate date of release, plus the publisher, price, credits and components, if applicable. See previous reviews for format. Reviews should be 500-1000 words in length. Challenge will not publish a review by anyone listed in the credits of the product reviewed.

Fiction: Challenge is not seeking fiction at this time. Fiction submissions will not be read.

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Good luck. If you have any questions, send them along with a SASE to:
Michelle Sturgeon, Managing Editor, PO Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA



I had just got back to old Syrtis after a few months poaching liftwood up in the highlands, and was feeling in need of a little rest. So it seemed like a stroke of good luck when I met Miss Clarendon strolling in the bazaar. She's a schoolteacher, and the sweetest thing under a bonnet on three planets. She mentioned a little trip she was planning. "Just an excursion to view the old Martian locks on the Moeris Canal. Would you like to come along, Doctor Blogsworth?"

"I'd be delighted to come, Miss Clarendon." I felt as though I was made of liftwood myself.

"I'm pleased that you will. And the children will be so happy."

"Er—children?"

"Yes. The schoolchildren from Rev. Lutwidge's School. We're taking a dozen of them along."

I'm usually a brave man, but suddenly I felt a pang of dread.

Rev. Louis Lutwidge, head of Rev. Lutwidge's School in Syrtis Major, is taking a group of students on a field trip. They will travel by steamer to the locks and pumping station on the Syrtis Major-Moeris Lacus Canal, where they can get a first-hand look at ancient Martian engineering.

There are two ways to handle this adventure. In an ongoing campaign, the adult PCs can be invited along by Miss Clarendon, a teacher at the school. (She can be assumed to be an old friend or distant relative of one of the PCs.) Or they may simply be passengers aboard the steamer.

If the gamemaster chooses to run this as a one-shot adventure, then the players can choose characters from the list of students.

MARTIAN QUEEN

The canal steamer *Martian Queen* is similar to the riverboats of the Mississippi. Normally, the ship carries mail, passengers and freight from Parhoon to Moeris Lacus via Syrtis Major, but Rev. Lutwidge has chartered it for the trip. There will be nobody aboard besides the school group (unless the adult PCs are passengers).

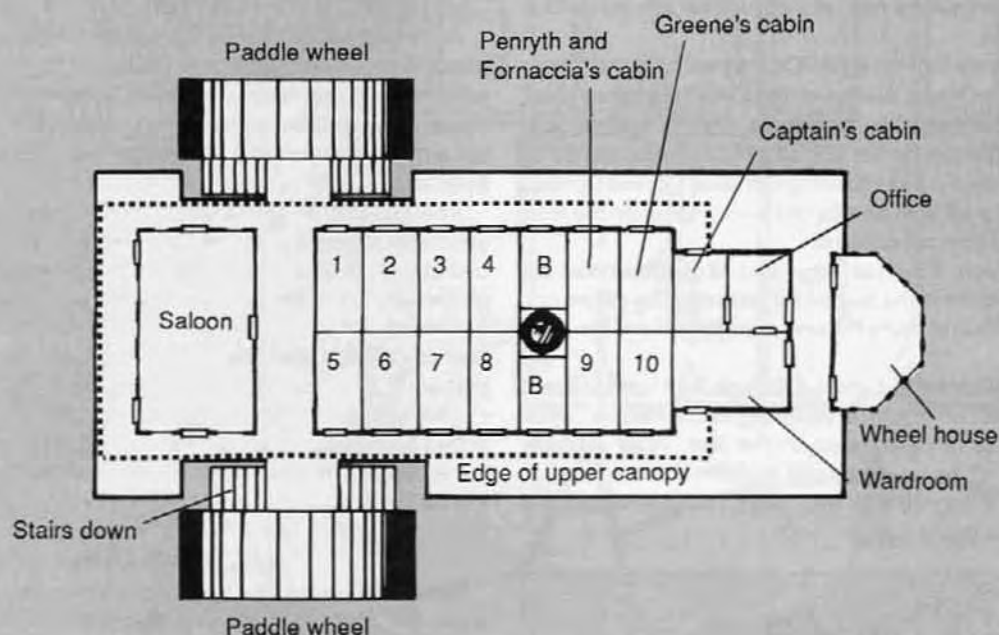
Ship: The deck plans show the layout of the *Martian Queen*. The rooms are labeled on the plan. The students will be housed two to a room in staterooms 2, 3, 6, and 7. Rev. Lutwidge will be in stateroom 1, and Miss Clarendon will be in stateroom 5. Any other adults will be in rooms 4, 8, 9 or 10.

Crew: The *Martian Queen* has a crew of 14. The master is Isaac McTavish; the first officer is Arthur Penryth; the pilot is Donald Greene (a former Mississippi riverboat pilot); and the engineer is Antonio Fornaccia. The ship's cook is a Martian named Vymoos. The deckhands, stokers and stewards are all Martians.

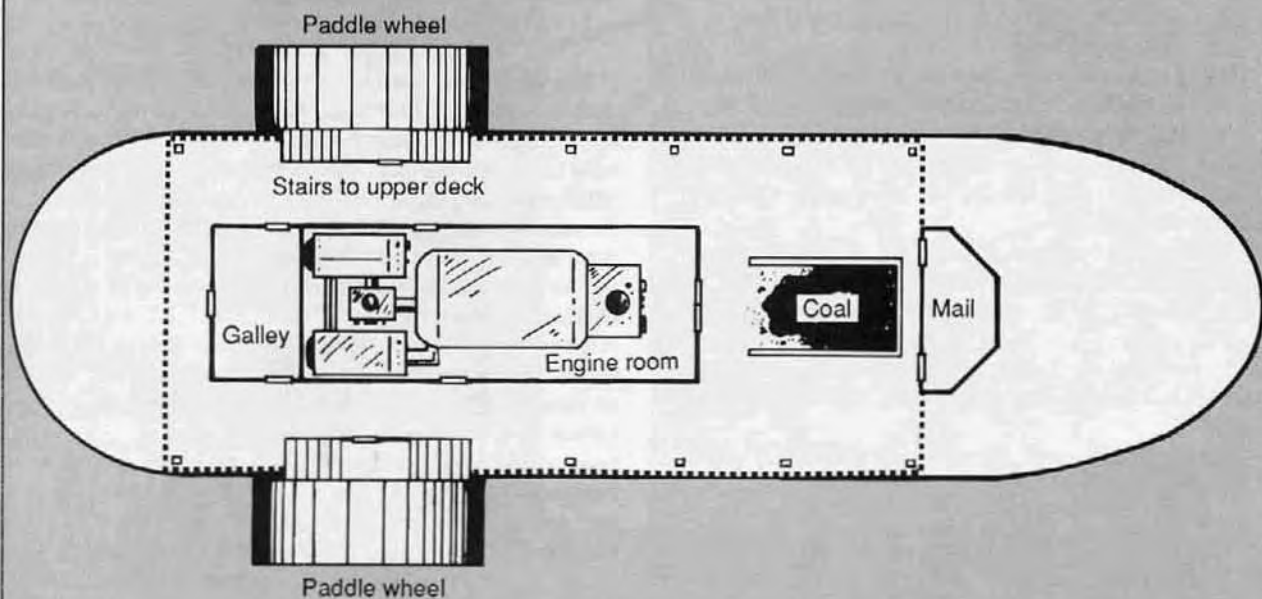
Playing Fields of Mars

**A Space: 1889 adventure for child characters
by James L. Cambias**

Upper Deck



Main Deck



VOYAGE

The *Martian Queen* sets out from Syrtis Major early in the morning. Rev. Lutwidge will excuse the children from their morning lessons so the youngsters can spend a few hours exploring the ship and getting into mischief. The galley and the engine room will be natural magnets for inquisitive children.

If the players are running adult PCs, they will have their hands full keeping order. Young Waffles will try to take the engines apart; little Lord Smallbridge will try to climb the mast; "Lizard" will go to the kitchen and make herself sick on Martian treats; and Smith Minor will try to talk the pilot into letting him steer. Clarissa Douglas and Smith Major will both develop massive crushes on the most attractive PCs of the opposite sex.

After luncheon, Rev. Lutwidge and Miss Clarendon will gather the children in the saloon for lessons. The adults can take the afternoon to study the ship themselves and meet the officers.

The ship will anchor at sunset. Although the *Martian Queen* is equipped with an electrical searchlight, Captain McTavish doesn't want to risk navigating in the dark. After a hearty English meal of boiled beef and pudding ("those Martian foods always disagree with me," says Rev. Lutwidge), the children will be put to bed.

Child Characters

Since the game **Space: 1889** draws much of its inspiration from boys' adventure stories of the past century, it is surprising that all the characters in the game are assumed to be adults. But the rules can easily be adapted to allow child characters.

Age Limits: Obviously, children are less capable than adults. This is reflected by limits on skills and attributes at different stages of development.

At 5 years old or below, characters can have a maximum Strength and Endurance of 1. They get no skills at all, not even the basic skills derived from a character's attributes.

From age 6 to 10, the children can have a maximum Strength of 2 and a maximum Endurance of 3. They get all the basic attribute-derived skills (Fisticuffs, Observation, etc.), and get one of their two free skill points to spend on skills.

At ages 11 through 15, characters can have a maximum Strength of 4; there are no other attribute limits. Characters of this age get both of their two free skill points, but are still too young to take any careers.

Characters aged 16 to 20 can take one career plus their two free skill points. Individuals who are 21 or older can have two careers, and are normal adult characters.

Childhood Career: If the campaign is realistic, then children will be limited in their abilities as described above. But a campaign or an adventure which focuses on child characters must allow them to be more capable.

The solution is the Childhood career. This career can only be taken by characters between the ages of 5 and 16. There are no other requirements.

Persons taking the Childhood career can learn a total of 6 levels in skills from the following list:

- Stealth
- Marksmanship (slingshot)
- Marksmanship (spitball)
- Mechanics (disassembly)
- Theatrics
- Linguistics (Pig-Latin)

The skill levels gained from the Childhood career are immediately lost as soon as the character enters on his or her first adult career.

The adults, including the ship's officers, gather in the saloon, and Rev. Lutwidge opens an old bottle of port which he has been saving. After an hour, everyone is sleepy, and all go to bed.

CAPTIVES!

At midnight, a gang of Fenians will invade the ship from an aerial flyer. There will be little chance of their being discovered, for both the port and the pudding were drugged. (If any character specified that he was not drinking the wine and did not eat the dinner, roll a Difficult task of Observation to be awakened.)

The Fenians will take each adult's cabin one by one, knocking out the characters and tying them up. When everyone at last wakes up, all the adult characters and the ship's officers are in the saloon, securely tied to chairs, guarded by a masked man with a Winchester rifle. (A Routine: Intellect task roll reveals that Rev. Lutwidge, Greene, and Signore Fornaccia are missing.)

The Martian crewmembers have been put ashore and bribed to keep quiet about the incident. They will try to alert the authorities, but will be unable to accomplish anything until it is far too late.

CHILDREN'S HOUR

Once the adults are helpless, the gamemaster should allow the players to choose characters from among the children on board. With the adults held prisoner and the ship in the hands of unknown enemies, can a group of British boys and girls save the day?

The children will wake up when the ship's engines are restarted and the *Martian Queen* begins to move again. If any of the students try to leave their cabins, they will find that there are masked men with guns posted at the stairways, who will roughly order anyone back to their rooms.

The children can communicate between adjacent rooms, as the walls are thin enough to allow limited conversation. They have whatever equipment is listed on the character descriptions. The rooms are all sparsely furnished, with a washbasin, bunk beds, a chair and a small writing desk.

FENIAN PLOT

The villains who have seized the ship are actually a gang of desperate Fenians. They are trying to disrupt the flow of supplies to the British Army fighting the rebels in Shastapsh. The Fenians have loaded the *Martian Queen* with dynamite and intend to set off the explosives as the ship enters the canal locks. This will close the canal to boat traffic. With the canal supply line cut, the British Army at Shastapsh will have to withdraw.

The bad guys are led by a heavily bearded man wearing a captain's uniform. He is really Rev. Lutwidge/Liam O'Connor in disguise. There are six other Fenians aboard, all armed with Winchester rifles, heavy revolvers and knives. They are all Veteran NPCs. One is guarding the adult characters in the saloon; one is in the pilothouse, where Donald Greene has been forced to steer the ship; two are in the engine room overseeing the Martian stokers and Signore Fornaccia; and two are on the upper deck, at the top of the stairways. Lutwidge/O'Connor will initially be on the lower deck, setting up the dynamite, but will move to wherever there is trouble.

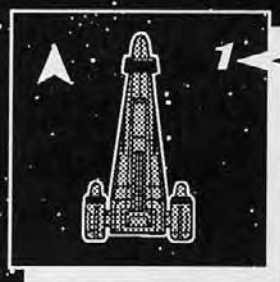
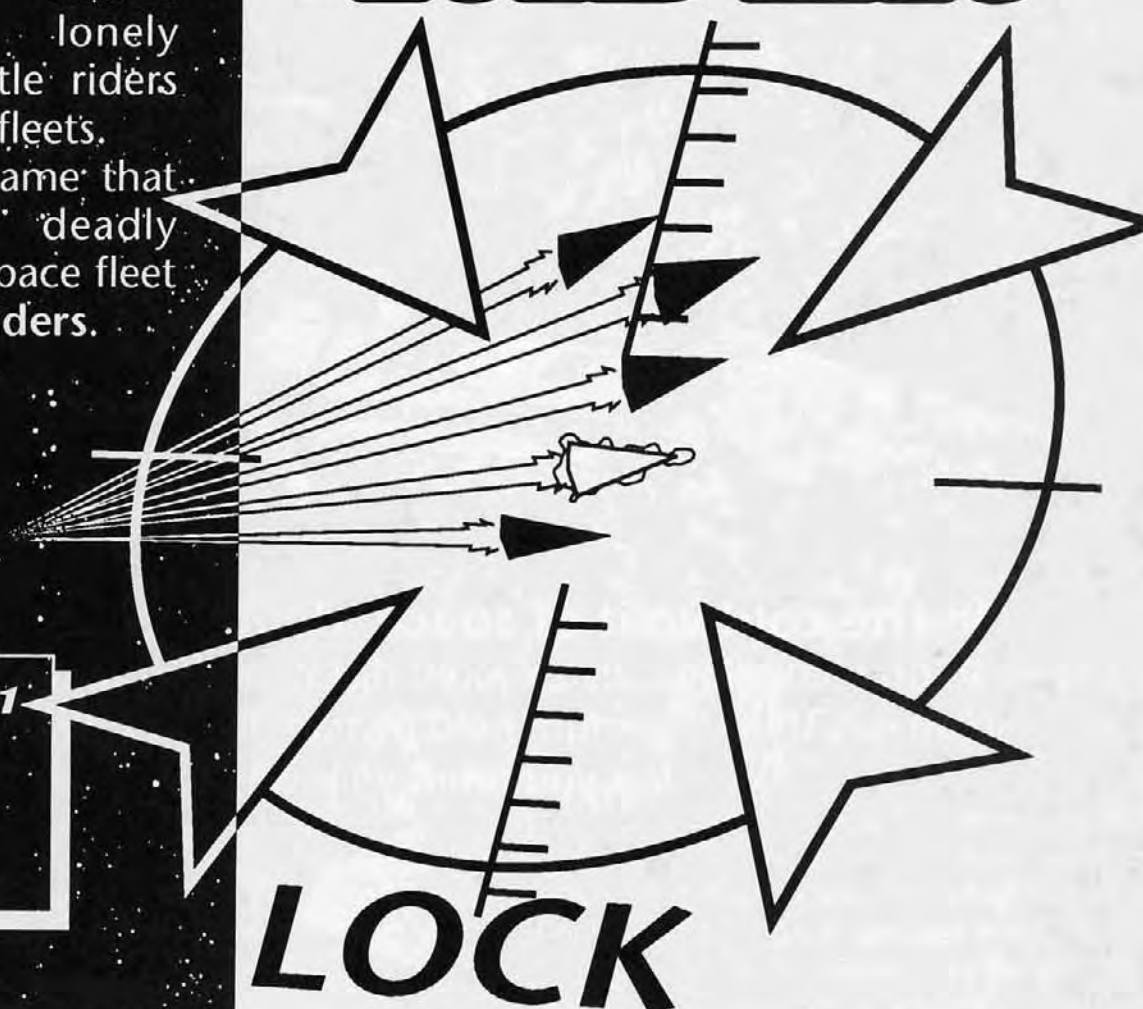
The dynamite is in a dozen big crates, lined up along the sides of the ship on the lower deck, with a timer apparatus set atop the coal bunker. Lutwidge's plan is to set the timer while the ship is in the locks, then escape aboard the aerial steam launch secured atop the ship. The ship will reach the locks by noon the next day.

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DEFEATING THE VILLAINS

The children must somehow overcome the Fenians and regain control of the *Martian Queen*. They can either try to fight the Fenians themselves, or release the adults and let them recover the ship. The primary advantage the children have is that the Fenians, while fanatics, are not completely inhuman. They will not shoot innocent children (though they have no qualms about blowing them up). If the children are armed, or if they have killed anyone, then the Fenians will no longer be so tolerant.

The gamemaster should let the players come up with their own plan and play it through. Initially, the children will not know about the dynamite or the aerial steam launch—the intentions of the Fenians should be a complete mystery. If at all possible, Lutwidge/O'Connor should survive the adventure, so that he can be unmasked at the end, snarling, "And I would have succeeded, if it hadn't been for you meddling kids!"

REV. LOUIS LUTWIDGE

Rev. Lutwidge is in fact the notorious Fenian Liam O'Connor. With dyed hair, thick spectacles, and a clergyman's clothing, it is very difficult to recognize that the stern, griggish schoolmaster is really a colorful revolutionary. Only after he has been defeated, and is no longer playing the part, will anyone be able to recognize his true identity.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 3, Throwing 2, Close Combat 2 (edged)
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Crime 4 (pick locks), Marksmanship 3 (pistol)
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mapping)
Int: 6	Observation 4, Engineering 2 (explosives), Science 1 (chemistry)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Theatrics 3, Linguistics 2 (Gaelic, Parhooni)
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (horse), Leadership 2, Medicine 1

Motives: Hatred (of Englishmen), Adventuresome, Leader.

Description: Liam O'Connor is a tall, handsome man with dark red hair and piercing eyes. He has great personal charm and is a superb natural leader. Disguised as Rev. Lutwidge, he wears a much-mended black suit and thick tinted spectacles. His hair is dyed gray, and his famous side-whiskers are shaved off. His Irish brogue will be covered by a Midlands accent. O'Connor always carries a pistol and knife hidden on his person.

CAPTAIN ISAAC MCTAVISH

Captain Isaac Edward McTavish is a full-blooded Scotsman who came to Mars with one of the earliest expeditions and never left. Despite the reputation for frugality which adheres to most Scots, McTavish is in fact quite generous. He certainly spares no expense where the *Martian Queen* is concerned. Though McTavish has no family of his own, he is fond of children.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 5	Fisticuffs 5, Throwing 3, Close Combat 1 (bashing)
Agl: 6	Stealth 5, Mechanics 2 (steam), Marksmanship 2 (rifle)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping), Swimming 1
Int: 4	Observation 4, Science 1 (physics), Engineering 1 (naval)
Chr: 1	Linguistics 3 (Parhooni, Koline, Hesperian)
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (gashant), Leadership 1, Piloting 2 (steamship)

Motives: Generous, Friendly.

Description: McTavish is a stout, cheerful man who dresses in a merchant captain's uniform. He has a red face and enormous white sideburns. Despite his weight, he is amazingly nimble. His voice is deep and loud, with a Scots accent that becomes stronger when he is excited. McTavish is normally unarmed.

SMITH MAJOR

Cyril Smith (age 15) is the older of the two Smith brothers at Rev. Lutwidge's school. He is very athletic and excels on the cricket field or on horseback. But his real love is shooting, and he lives for the day when he can have his very own rifle. Until then, he will hone his skill with a slingshot. Smith Major is aware that his younger brother has all the brains, and is very protective of him. Anyone who harms Smith Minor will have Smith Major to answer to.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 4	Fisticuffs 4, Throwing 2, Close Combat (bashing) 1
Agl: 5	Stealth 4, Marksmanship 3 (slingshot)
End: 4	Wilderness Travel 3 (mountaineering)
Int: 2	Observation 1
Chr: 2	Eloquence 1, Linguistics 1 (Pig-Latin), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse)

Motives: Love (of brother), Adventuresome.

Description: Cyril Smith is a tall, good-looking boy. He has unruly light-brown hair and an infectious grin. Smith Major wears the standard schoolboy uniform—flannel trousers and an Eton jacket. He usually carries his slingshot hidden in his boot.

SMITH MINOR

Jeremy Smith is Cyril's younger brother. Though he is only 12, he is already much more intelligent and knowledgeable than his brother. Smith Minor is a quiet boy, but when he does speak up he often startles adults with what he knows. He is particularly interested in the ancient Martians and their ruins. Smith Minor and Syukeem are best friends.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	
Agl: 5	Stealth 6, Crime 2 (pick locks)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mountaineering)
Int: 5	Observation 4, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Theatrics 3, Linguistics 1 (Pig-Latin)
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (gashant)

Motives: Knowledge, Loyal (to brother).

Description: Smith Minor is a small, skinny little boy with the same tousled hair as his older brother. He usually looks very serious, and is much more calm and well-behaved than most 12 year olds. He still is in short pants and wears a cap.

SMALLS

Thomas Albert, Lord Smallbridge and Baron Twickenham, is only 9 years old. He gained the titles after the tragic death of his father in a gashant stampede two years ago. His mother, Lady Smallbridge, elected to remain on Mars, where she heads the Explorers' Club Ladies' Auxiliary. Young Lord Smallbridge is unfortunately all too aware of his exalted position, and seldom hesitates to remind others of his wealth and importance. He is very much a spoiled brat. Though Smalls is not a good student, he has won the grudging respect of the others through his astounding ability to sneak around the school at night, and his accuracy with the slingshot. His only real friend is Waffles, as they share an interest in random destruction.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Agil: 6	Stealth 6, Marksmanship 4 (slingshot)
End: 1	
Int: 1	
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 3 (Latin, Parhoooni, Pig-Latin)
Soc: 6	Riding 5 (horse)

Motives: Arrogant, Greedy.

Appearance: Smalls is a small boy with a large, beaky nose and very pale blond hair. He has a wide range of speech impediments. Smalls wears the same short pants and cap uniform as the other young boys, but his are custom-made by the best tailors. His shirts and socks are silk. Smalls keeps a slingshot in his cap.

"WAFFLES"

Waffles's real name is George Whitford. Though only 8 years old, he has already learned a great deal about mechanics and chemistry. Waffles is motivated by an intense desire to know how things work. He can seldom resist the urge to dismantle something. And if he can't take something apart, he is equally fond of blowing things up. His parents sent him to Rev. Lutwidge's school after he destroyed one wing of their house in Meepsoor.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1
Agil: 4	Stealth 3, Mechanics 2 (disassembly), Marksmanship 2 (spitball)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 6	Observation 5, Science 1 (chemistry), Engineering 1 (explosives)
Chr: 4	Eloquence 3, Linguistics 1 (Pig-Latin), Theatrics 1
Soc: 3	Riding 2 (gashant)

Motives: Knowledge, Eccentric.

Description: Waffles is a chubby little boy, unremarkable in appearance. Around adults, he is very shy, sometimes to the point of being unable to speak. He is usually very well-behaved, except when he is left alone with some interesting machinery, or anything that looks as if it might burn. He always carries a screwdriver, and starts the adventure with three firecrackers and a book of matches.

CLARISSA

Clarissa Douglas is 16 years old and is very much aware that she is not a child anymore. She resents any attempt to treat her as a one and always tries to be included in any "grown-up" activities. However, sometimes she forgets that she is an adult, and she has masterminded some awful mischief. Clarissa wants to see the world and have some fun. She is very romantic and falls in love often. Clarissa is beginning a career as an adventuress.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 2	Fisticuffs 1, Throwing 1, Close Combat 1 (edged)
Agil: 3	Stealth 2, Marksmanship 2 (pistol), Crime 1 (forgery)
End: 2	Wilderness Travel 1 (mapping)
Int: 5	Observation 5, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 5, Linguistics 2 (French, Parhoooni), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse), Leadership 1

Motives: Adventurous, Stubborn.

Description: Clarissa is already a very striking-looking girl and is likely to be an utterly beautiful woman. With her long

black hair and big dark eyes, she has a slightly Latin appearance. She still wears dull schoolgirl frocks. She always has a hatpin at her disposal (treat as a stiletto).

"LIZARD"

Elizabeth "Lizard" Pinkwood is 11 years old and a determined tomboy. She routinely beats up Waffles, Smalls and Smith Minor, and once fought Smith Major to a draw. Lizard is most effective when armed with a croquet mallet or cricket bat, but can use an umbrella if necessary. She admires Clarissa enormously and wants to be like her when she gets older.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	Close Combat 1 (bashing)
Agil: 4	Stealth 5
End: 3	Wilderness Travel 2 (mountaineering)
Int: 4	Observation 3
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 2 (Pig-Latin), Theatrics 2
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (horse)

Motives: Aggressive, Fair.

Description: Lizard is a wiry, skinny little girl with torn stockings and mud on her skirt. She always loses her hat. Lizard has curly red hair and freckles. She is almost constantly in motion. Lizard has no equipment (she would only lose it).

SYUKEEM

Natuuz Syukeem is the only Martian student at Rev. Lutwidge's school. He is 6 Martian years old (about 12 Earth years). His family are merchants, who saw an advantage in having a son educated by the English. Syukeem is already a good merchant himself—he makes quite a bit of money smuggling goodies into the school, selling test answers and betting on Lizard's fights. But he has also become interested in the history of his people and would like to learn more about Mars than Rev. Lutwidge teaches.

Attribute	Skills
Str: 1	
Agil: 2	Stealth 4
End: 5	Wilderness Travel 4 (foraging)
Int: 4	Observation 3, Science 1 (archaeology)
Chr: 5	Eloquence 4, Linguistics 2 (English, Koline), Theatrics 3
Soc: 4	Riding 3 (gashant)

Motives: Mercantile, Knowledge.

Description: Syukeem is average height for a 6-year-old Martian; he is over five feet tall and growing fast. He is very slender and is not as strong as the other students, but his Martian constitution already gives him better stamina than most human adults. He wears English-style school clothes, modified for his alien frame. It was agreed by all that he should wear long pants instead of shorts. ☺



D-Day, June 4-12 at Game Towne in Carlsbad, CA. Contact D-Day. Game Towne, 2933 Roosevelt, Carlsbad, CA 92008.

Fanfaire '94, June 9-12 at the Holiday Inn at Roper Mountain Road and I-385, Greenville, SC. Contact Fanfaire Productions, Inc., PO Box 1801, Greenville, SC 29602-1801.

Con-tretemps 8, June 17-19 at the Ramada Inn, 72nd and I-80, Omaha, NE. Contact Con-tretemps 8, PO Box 4071, Omaha, NE 68104-9998.

Capitalcon X, June 18-19 at the Prairie Capital Convention Center in Springfield, IL. Contact John Holtz, 400 E. Jefferson St., Springfield, IL 62701.

Dallas Game Expo, June 24-26 at the LeBaron Hotel in Dallas, TX. Contact Dallas Game Expo, PO Box 824662, Dallas, TX 75382.

Archon 18, June 24-26 at The Gateway Center in Collinsville, IL. Contact Archon 18, PO Box 483, Chesterfield, MO 63006-0483.

Skirmishes '94, June 24-26 in Kansas City, MO. Contact Skirmishes, 812 NE 100 Terr., Kansas City, MO 64155.

PaxCon 1994, June 25-26 at the Best Western Maryland Inn in Laurel, MD (a suburb of Washington D.C.). Contact Chesapeake Games, PO Box 13607, Silver Spring, MD 20911-3607.

S.T.A.R.S. '94, July 1-14 at the Atlanta Hilton and Towers, Atlanta, GA. Contact S.T.A.R.S., PO Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696.

Archon 18, July 8-10 in St. Louis, MO. Contact Archon 18, PO Box 50125, Clayton, MO 63105.

Quincon IX, July 15-17 at the Signature Room at Franklin Square, 317 State St., Quincy, IL. Send a SASE to Quincon IX, c/o Mark Hoskins, 1181 Pratt St., Barry, IL 62312.

Dragon*Con '94, July 15-17 at the Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel, Atlanta, GA. Contact Cragon*Con '94, PO Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696.

Organized Kahn-Fusion XIII: Operation Green Flag: BattleTech, July 23-24 at the West Enola Fire Hall in Enola, PA. Contact M. Foner's Games Only Emporium, 200 Third St., New Cumberland, PA 17070.

VikingCon 15, Aug. 5-7 at Western Washington University. Contact WWU Viking Union V-1, Bellingham, WA 98225.

Gamefest XV, Aug. 10-14 in historic Old Towne in San Diego, CA. Contact Gamefest XV, 3954 Harney St., San Diego, CA 92110.

Supernova, Aug. 13-14 at the Dulles Days Inn in Herndon, VA. Contact Supernova, c/o Wargamers, 101 Holly Ave. #5, Sterling, VA.

GEN CON Game Fair 1994, August 18-21 at MECCA Convention Center, Milwaukee, WI. Contact GEN CON Game Fair Headquarters, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

CascadeCon '94, Aug. 19-21 at Shilo Inn on Canyon Road, Portland/Beaverton, OR. Contact Cascade Con., PO Box 86734, Portland, OR 97286-4833.

Conadian/Worldcon 52, Sept. 1-5 at the Winnipeg Convention Centre, Canada. Contact Conadian, PO Box 2430, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3C 4A7.

Sioux City Con IX, Sept. 2-4 at the Hilton in Sioux City, IA. Contact M.A.G.E., 820 N. Dakota Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57104.

Gateway 14, Sept. 2-5 at the LA Airport Hyatt Hotel. Contact Strategicon, PO Box 3849, Torrance, CA 90510-3849.

Americon, Sept. 17-18 at the Clayton American Legion on the Clayton/Franklinville border, NJ. Contact Americon, c/o Carl "Thunder," PO Box 125, Mullica Hill, NJ 08062.

Quad Con '94, Oct. 7-9 at the Palmer Alumni Auditorium, 1000 Brady St., Davenport, IA. For information, send two stamps on a long SASE to Quad Con '94, The Game Emporium, 3213 23rd Ave., Moline, IL 61265.

DreamCon 9, Oct. 28-30 at the Everett Holiday Inn in Everett, WA. Contact Dreamcon 9, 10121 Evergreen Way 103, Everett, WA 98024.

Orycon 16, Nov. 11-1 at Red Lion Columbia River, Portland, OR. For details, contact Orycon 16, PO Box 5703, Portland, OR 97208.

Pentacon X, Nov. 12-13 in Grand Wayne Center in downtown Fort Wayne, IN. For more information, contact Steve and Linda Smith, 836 Himes St., Huntington, IN 46750.

Winter War XXII, Feb. 3-5, 1995, at the Chancellor Hotel, 1501 S. Neil St., Champaign, IL. Send a SASE to Donald McKinney, 986 Pomona Drive, Champaign, IL 61821.

Katsucon One, Feb. 17-19, 1995 at the Holiday Inn Executive Center in Virginia Beach, VA. Contact Katsu Productions, PO Box 11582, Blacksburg, VA 24062-1582.

World Horror Convention '95, March 2-5, 1995, at the Sheraton Colony Square Hotel in Atlanta, GA. Send a SASE to World Horror Convention '95, PO Box 148, Clarkston, GA 30021-0148.

Westercon 48, June 30-July 3, 1995, at Red Lion/Jantzen Beach and Columbia River hotels, Portland, OR. Contact Westercon 48, Box 2584, Portland, OR 97228-2584.

Archon 19, July 7-9, 1995, in St. Louis, MO. Contact Archon 18, PO Box 50125, Clayton, MO 63105.

NASFiC '95, July 13-16, 1995, at the Atlanta Hilton and Towers and Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel, Atlanta, Ga. Contact NASFiC '95, PO Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696.

Convention announcements cannot be included unless received a minimum of four months in advance of the event. Challenge is not responsible for errors in convention announcements. Write to Challenge Conventions, Managing Editor, PO Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA.

NEW CHARACTER TEMPLATES

A SUPPLEMENT TO STAR WARS' MOS EISLEY GALAXY GUIDE

By Martin Wixted

West End's *Galaxy Guide 7: Mos Eisley Spaceport* introduces one of *Star Wars'* most famous cities. You will never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy. It is the first galaxy guide published for the second edition of the game, and this article offers a selection of character templates for that most dangerous of locales. Also included is a freighter for the characters' use (the ship comes with a heavy debt, of course).

VENGEFUL SANDSTORM

The ship is the *Vengeful Sandstorm*. Armanda Durkin, CEO of Notsub Corporation (*Mos Eisley*, page 80) has finally had enough. She has sold her ship to a group of new recruits. Because the crew does not have the cash on hand for an outright purchase, Durkin agreed to part cash and part work-for-hire. By doing this, she hopes to keep tighter control over their activities than was possible with members of her former crew, as well as having a group in her corner who owes her.

The *Vengeful Sandstorm* was a light freighter that had seen better days. The ship had endured one too many Kessel runs, and was badly in need of an overhaul. Durkin purchased the ship at a fair price, found a mechanic who could keep his mouth shut, and paid him well. It took three seasons to check, test, repair and/or replace every system. The shields were upgraded, a Carbanti communications jammer was installed, and the hull was reinforced. The ship looks unaltered when viewed from the outside, but its derelict appearance belies its sophisticated capabilities. Durkin appreciated the innocuous look of the freighter, which came in handy during a lengthy discussion with a customs patrol ship officer. The new members of the crew will likely feel the same after a season on Tatooine.

Craft: Modified Corellian SS-19 Cargo Transport

Type: Stock Light Freighter
Scale: Starfighter
Length: 25 meters
Skill: Space Transports: SS-19
Cargo Transports 6D, starship gunnery 5D, starship shields 4D
Crew: 2
Passengers: 4
Cargo Capacity: 110 metric tonnes, 42 cubic meters
Consumables: 1 week
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1
Hyperdrive Backup: Yes
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 2D
Space: 4
Atmosphere: 210 kph
Hull: 2D+2
Shields: 2D
Sensors:
Passive: 20/1D
Scan: 40/1D
Search: 50/2D
Focus: 2/2D
Weapons:
Four Double Laser Cannons (fire separately)
Fire Arc: 3 front, 1 back
Crew: 1
Skill: Starship Gunnery
Fire Control: 2D
Space Range: 1-3/12/25km
Atmosphere Range: 10-300m/1km/2.5km
Damage: 4D
Price: 45,000 (includes refurbishments)

Cockpit: The standard freighter cockpit—two pilot chairs, two secondary systems chairs, and a lucky charm hanging down in front of the portal—in this case, a Womp Rat claw.

Boarding Ramp: The passage to the cockpit also contains the telescoping boarding ramp, a former modification Durkin dislikes intensely. When docked, the lowered ramp cuts off the cockpit.

Laser Battery Port: Two Taim & Bak heavy laser cannons are found here. A

pair of gun control pods are stuffed into this small area.

Escape Pod: Large enough to accommodate 10 beings, this custom vehicle is more akin to a lifeboat. It launches upward, out of the ship.

Engineering: The engines and engineering stations are intertwined in this area. The engines are modified Kuat Drive Yard subspace/hyperspace engines.

Workshop ('Droid Repair and Maintenance): Most emergency repairs to 'droids and jury-rig repairs to the ship can be handled from this area.

Laser Battery Starboard: A single Torplex heavy laser cannon with rotating gunner seat is crammed into this compartment.

Access Hatches (Dorsal/Ventral): This area holds the deep space docking ports. The docking clamps are rated to operate at speeds up to half maximum sublight.

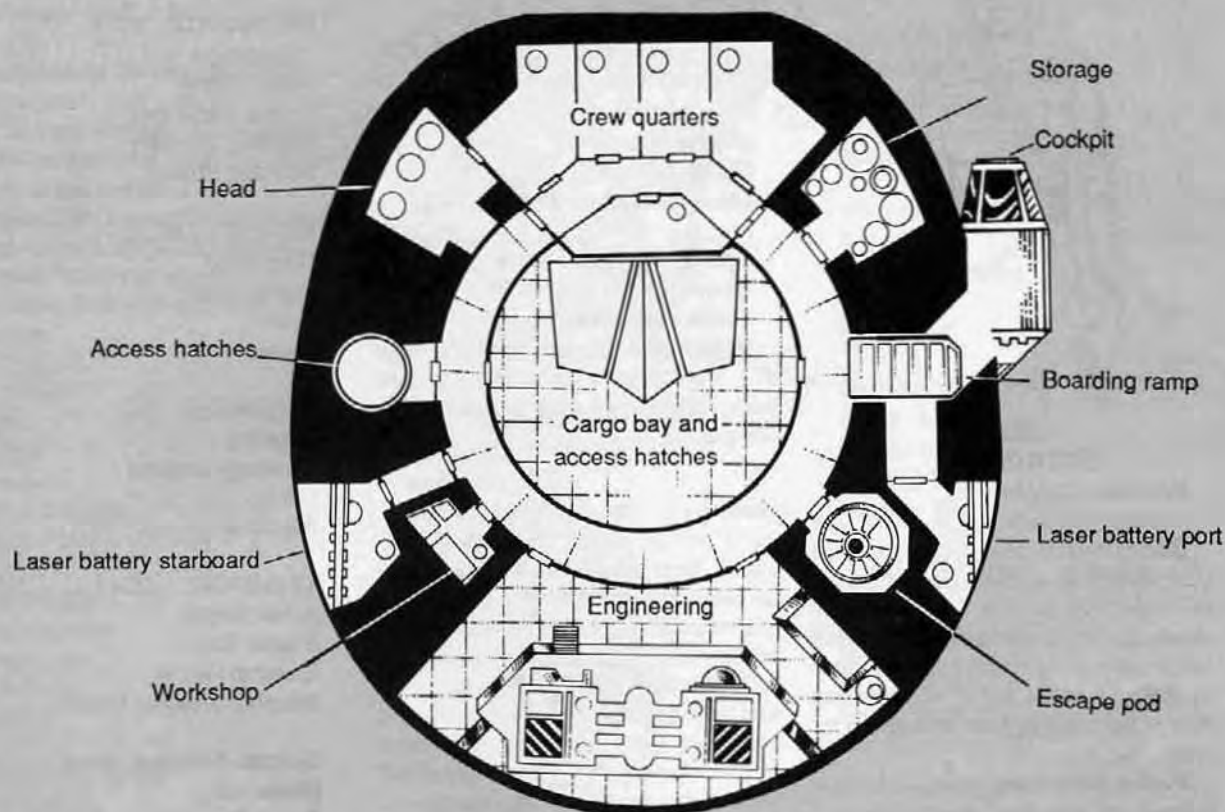
Head, Crew Quarters: Typical cramped quarters and rudimentary facilities (i.e., bunk beds and prepackaged food) are in this area. Because this ship is not used on extended flights, Durkin has not refitted these areas.

Storage: This area stores the inevitable knickknacks picked up over the course of dozens of raids. Durkin has yet to see the need to use this as a temporary brig, but the possibility exists.

Cargo Bay (Two Decks) and Access Hatches: The cargo bay extends underneath almost the entire main deck of the ship. It is a cramped space, but 'droids handle most of the stowage details. When raiding, cargo bay doors are opened on both ships. Space-suited pirates supervise the 'droid cargo exchange.

Heavy Laser Cannon (Not Shown): The final Torplex heavy laser cannon is mounted ventrally. This gun is controlled from the cockpit by the co-pilot (and is the only gun wired to the cockpit).

Vengeful Sandstorm



GENTLE GAMORREAN

Species: Gamorrean

Gender: Male

Background: Your interest in technology and the stars branded you a weakling by belligerent Gamorreans. You were sold into slavery by your own clan. Having escaped that fate, you fell into a friendship which has helped prove to you that there is more to life than combat.

Personality: You have a short tem-

per, and a culturally induced hatred of 'droids—both of which you are trying to control. You are fascinated by technology and the method behind "what makes it go."

Objectives: To teach others, by example, that Gamorreans can be "civilized."

Quote: "Since I am a gracious Gamorrean, I will not rip your head off. But I really, really want to."

DEXTERITY 2D

Blaster
Dodge
Grenade
Melee Combat
Melee Parry

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Alien Species
Languages
Streetwise
Survival

MECHANICAL 1D+2

Astrogation
Beast Riding
Space Transports
Starship Gunnery
Starship Shields

PERCEPTION 2D

Command
Investigation
Search
Sneak

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling
Climbing/Jumping
Lifting
Stamina

TECHNICAL 1D+1

Armor Repair
Blaster Repair
Starship Repair
Starship Weapon Repair

Special Abilities: Voice Box: You cannot speak Basic. Stamina: Get a reroll to make a failed Stamina check. Skill Bonus: See page 134 of *Star Wars* second edition.

Move: 7/10

Force Points:

Force Sensitive: No

Equipment: Vibroaxe (Damage 6D+1), 500 credits, protective chest plate (+2D against Damage), outdated Republic Sienar Systems toolkit (+1D to repair skills).



GLIB SCOUNDREL

Species: Near-human

Gender: Female

Background: Mos Eisley was as good as any other spaceport. You used to target the tourists for your card-sharking and con games (and tease the good-looking boys) until you got caught by the new police force. You feel that now is the time to look elsewhere for profit.

Personality: Easy-going and rather gregarious, you don't mind pilfering a bit from those who can afford it.

Objectives: Avoid heavily policed worlds who don't seem to appreciate your light fun.

Quote: "And now, my friends, read 'em and weep. A Rowack Flush!"

DEXTERITY 3D+1

Blaster
Dodge
Grenade
Melee Combat
Melee Parry

KNOWLEDGE 4D

Alien Species
Languages
Streetwise
Survival

MECHANICAL 2D+1

Astrogation
Beast Riding
Space Transports
Starship Gunnery
Starship Shields

PERCEPTION 3D+2

Command
Investigation
Search
Sneak

STRENGTH 2D

Brawling
Climbing/Jumping
Lifting
Stamina

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Armor Repair
Blaster Repair
Starship Repair
Starship Weapon Repair

Special Abilities: None

Move: 10

Force Sensitive:

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Damage 4D), Sabbac card deck, Tranyon card deck, hidden belt pouch, 100 credits, comlink.



YEARNING FARMHAND

Species: Human

Background: Life as a moisture farmer on Tatooine has been dreary, boring and lifeless. Aching for a glimpse into other worlds, you are determined to join the very next group of spaceward travellers.

Personality: You are very keyed-up and comment on everything. Space travel is the most exciting thing that has ever happened to you, and you want to be sure and not miss a thing.

Objectives: See as much of the galaxy as is humanly possible.

Quote: "Why don't you outrun 'em? I thought you said this thing was fast!"

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster
Dodge
Grenade
Melee Combat
Melee Parry

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien Species

Languages

Streetwise
Survival

MECHANICAL 3D+1

Astrogation
Beast Riding
Space Transports
Starship Gunnery
Starship Shields

PERCEPTION 2D+1

Command
Investigation
Search
Sneak

STRENGTH 4D

Brawling
Climbing/Jumping
Lifting
Stamina

TECHNICAL 2D+1

Armor Repair
Blaster Repair
Starship Repair
Starship Weapon Repair

Special Abilities: None

Move: 10

Force Sensitive:

Equipment: Makeshift sword (Damage 5D+2), 20 credits, 2 medpacks, box of 20 glow rods, broken comlink.



RUEFUL MILITIA MEMBER

Species: Human

Background: Living on the edge of Mos Eisley is what attracted you to it in the first place. Now they install a real police force and drive you away. It's not too late to go somewhere else further out, where frontier towns still need rough-and-tumble law enforcers.

Personality: Your idea of the perfect place is one in which the law and the citizens work things out. This new Empire is looking to force everyone into a single mode. Well, it won't happen to you.

You march to the beat of a different Vox drummer. You use your fists as often as your blaster. Most folks just need to be told who runs this town in order to follow the law.

Objectives: To reach an area rough enough to once again call "home."

Quote: "What say you just put down the blaster, and you can walk out of here alive."



UNSOPHISTICATED SYNDICATE STOOGES

Species: Twi'lek

Background: You could have been somebody. Well, maybe not for a few more years, but you sure tried. That's what got you in so much trouble. Always trying too hard. Always pushing too far. It's a good thing you only worked for one of Jabba's cronies instead of for the Bloated One himself. At least this way, when you were fired, you could live to tell about it. Of course, now that it's almost gone, the money you took as "severance pay" won't be missed. You're sure of it. Well, almost.

Personality: Unlike your species' typical reticence for conflict and confrontation, you are always looking to get that last little bit out of a situation. You push, usually just before the deal is made. You know that it often blows the deal, but sometimes you just can't help it.

Objectives: To regain the prestige you feel you have lost by leaving the highly stratified structure of the crime syndicate.

Quote: "Let me look over the contract once more. I'd like you to consider another small concession."

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster
Dodge
Grenade
Melee Combat
Melee Parry

KNOWLEDGE 3D+2

Alien Species
Languages
Streetwise
Survival

MECHANICAL 2D

Astrogation

Beast Riding
Space Transports
Starship Gunnery
Starship Shields

PERCEPTION 4D+1

Command
Investigation
Search
Sneak

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling
Climbing/Jumping
Lifting
Stamina

TECHNICAL 2D

Armor Repair
Blaster Repair
Starship Repair
Starship Weapon Repair

Special Abilities: Tentacles: Can communicate with other Twi'leks in sign language using your head tails.

Move: 10

Force Sensitive:

Equipment: 5500 credits, hold-out blaster (Damage 3D).



HOPEFUL TRASH COLLECTOR

Species: Ugol

Gender: None

Height: 1 meter

Weight: 80 kilograms

Background: Being an amorphous blob never appealed to you. You longed to be near-human, and have spent many years trying to conform to your vision of the perfect biped. Casting off your innate love of garbage has not been totally successful, and in weaker moments you nonchalantly snake out an additional pseudopod to pick something up off the ground or from someone's pocket. You usually have 10 pseudopods extended: two ears and eyes,

DEXTERITY 4D

Blaster
Dodge
Grenade
Melee Combat
Melee Parry

KNOWLEDGE 3D

Alien Species
Languages
Streetwise
Survival

MECHANICAL 2D

Astrogation
Beast Riding
Space Transports
Starship Gunnery
Starship Shields

PERCEPTION 3D+1

Command
Investigation
Search
Sneak

STRENGTH 3D

Brawling
Climbing/Jumping
Lifting
Stamina

TECHNICAL 2D+2

Armor Repair
Blaster Repair
Starship Repair
Starship Weapon Repair

Special Abilities: None

Move: 10

Force Sensitive: No

Equipment: 2 fragmentation grenades (Damage 5D/4D/3D/2D), knife (Damage 4D), light repeating blaster (Damage 6D), sand filter mask, comlink, macrobinoculars, blast helmet (+1D against physical and energy attacks), 75 credits.

a nose, a mouth, and two arms and legs. On a good day, you can be mistaken for a hairless, albino Ewok.

Personality: You're a liar, a thief and a swindler. You want badly to fit in, in a way you never will. That doesn't prevent you from trying, though. On occasion, you slip up and extend a pseudopod from the middle of your back; otherwise, you've been pretty good at keeping yourself in check.

Objectives: Although gambling, bargaining and cheating are a way of life for your species, they actually take a back seat to your desire to fit transparently into society. You attempt to accomplish this by observing how your favorite bipeds behave.

Quote: "My, what a lovely piece of garbage you have there. Err...sorry."

DEXTERITY 3D

Blaster
Dodge
Grenade
Melee Combat
Melee Parry

KNOWLEDGE 2D

Alien Species
Languages
Streetwise
Survival

MECHANICAL 1D+2

Astrogation
Beast Riding
Space Transports
Starship Gunnery
Starship Shields

PERCEPTION 2D

Command
Investigation
Search
Sneak

STRENGTH 2D

Brawling
Climbing/Jumping
Lifting
Stamina

TECHNICAL 1D+1

Armor Repair
Blaster Repair
Starship Repair
Starship Weapon Repair

Special Abilities: Amorphous: You may spend a round doing nothing except extending or retracting a single 0.5-meter-long pseudopod (arm, leg, mouth, nose, ear or eye). You may have up to 30 appendages. Each additional pair of legs add 1 to your Move score, up to a total Move of 12. Normal skill

penalties apply for multiple actions (see *Star Wars* second edition, page 29).

Move: 8

Force Sensitive:

Equipment: X-Wing high-G suit (tailored for your short, robust form), stolen jeweler's eyepiece (+1D to Value skill), stolen blaster pistol (Damage 4D), stolen sporting blaster (Damage 3D+1), 250 credits, several tiny trinkets of no value (read: garbage). Ω

Don't miss "The HoloNet Waystation" by Martin Wixted, a setting for Star Wars' Mos Eisley Galaxy Guide, in Challenge 74.



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you

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TRAVELLER®
The New Era

New Technologies and Tactics

By Aaron Braskin

New technology, tactics and combined arms are desired to overcome the clans' devastating combat ability, but little has been offered specifically. The New Avalon Tactics Research Think Tank has released the following documentation and BattleMech designs in its first attempt at exploring new technologies and tactics.

New Avalon Tactics Research Think Tank Paper #FCH145-AS

The key technologies which we have isolated for use have been the C3 computer system in combination with the pulse laser. Previously, the pulse laser has had limited applications because of its shorter range. In addition to these high-technology advancements, one piece of battle tactics is added: concentrated fire. The team leader designates a target, and the whole lance moves to target that unit—unleashing a hellish barrage of pulse lasers!

In most cases, the benefit of extra accuracy associated with the pulse laser is more than lost by the range reduction. Tests show that any opponent who is aware of pulse laser technology and has any ranged weapon capacity can move to longer ranges and offset any possible benefit of the pulse laser.

But that is not the case if the laser system is installed as a package with the C3 computer system. In this instance, the range advantage can be maintained because all the units in a lance can fire based upon the targeting information of the closest unit!

Our research has determined that a standard medium lance could be produced, a force which would be fully integrated to fight as a unit, rather than as single units. The unit leader would pilot a 'mech we have dubbed the "Pulse Leader." This 'mech weighs 50 tons and has limited movement.

Its key weapons are matched pulse lasers, one in the arm and another in the torso. The 'mech avoids XL technology because it is far too likely that a 'mech will be killed by losing a single torso.

Endo Steel construction was used along with double heat sinks to offset the high heat effects of the pulse lasers. The Pulse Leader is actually required to stay behind its two screen 'mechs because it holds the master computer in the C3 system and thus must be carefully protected.

The next unit in the lance is the 45-ton Pulsar: There will be two of these in each lance. They serve the purpose of screening the Pulse Leader and of high-powered fire support.

In battle, these two 'mechs will orient themselves against the targeted enemy 'mech and unload a precision barrage of pulse lasers at maximum range.

The C3 computer will completely offset the long-range effects, and the pulse technology will allow for devastating accuracy! Each of these 'mechs is equipped with two large pulse lasers.

The final unit in the lance is the heaviest at 60 tons. The Ranger has the difficult task of closing with an enemy unit and maintaining a deadly attack while sending critical range information back to the C3 system.

Therefore, this 'mech is heavily armored (as much as we

could possibly fit!) and has a devastating close-in attack. It combines a hand axe with a single large pulse laser.

The 'mech was designed with Myomer accelerator signal circuitry in order to improve its movement profile. This should allow it to close quickly with the enemy and permit all its teammates to deliver a devastating barrage of laser fire with deadly accuracy!

This concludes the 'mech portion of the strategy. It is our opinion that a dedicated vehicle detachment could work with this unit to improve its ability even further. Research and design has begun on that aspect and is expected to be completed soon.

The above research paper has been analyzed by the NAIS and approved as to form and content. Prototype models are currently being tested in the field. Results are promising, though data is still being collected.

PLS-5A PULSE LEADER

Technology: Inner Sphere 3050
Tonnage: 50.00

Internal Structure: Endo Steel 2.50
Engine: Nissan 200 8.50

Walking: 4
Running: 6
Jumping: 4

Heat Sinks: 12 Double 2.00

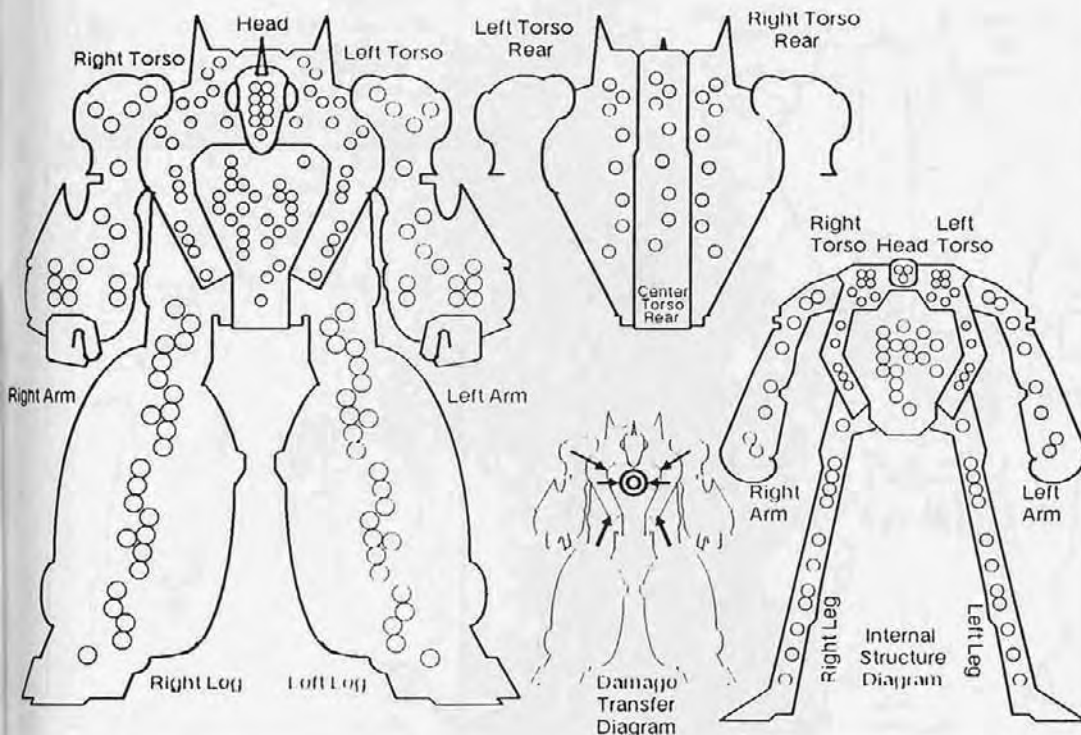
Gyro: 2.00
Cockpit: 3.00

Armor Factor: 176 11.00
Internal External

Head 3 9
Center Torso 16 24/8
Left/Right Torso 12 16/8
Left/Right Arm 8 16
Left/Right Leg 12 24

Type	Loc	Qty	Crits	Tons
Heat Sink	LT	1	3	1.00
Heat Sink	RT	1	3	1.00
Heat Sink	LA	1	3	1.00
Heat Sink	RA	1	3	1.00
Jump Jet	CTR	2	1	1.00
Jump Jet	LTR	1	1	0.50
Jump Jet	RTR	1	1	0.50
Large pulse laser	LT	1	2	7.00
Large pulse laser	RT	1	2	7.00

INNER SPHERE 3050



MECH DATA

Type: PLS-5A Pulse Leader

Tonnage: 50

Movement Points:

Walking: 4

Running: 6

Jumping: 4

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

#	Loc	Type	Ht	Dam	Mm	St	Mm	Lg
1	LT	L.P. Laser	10	9		3	7	10
1	RT	L.P. Laser	10	9		3	7	10
1	RT	C-3 Comp.	0					

WARRIOR DATA

Name: _____

Gunnery Skill: _____ Piloting Skill: _____

Hits Taken: (Consciousness Number)

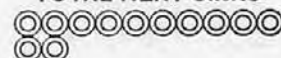
1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

(3) (5) (7) (10) (11)(Dead) KILLS

HEAT SCALE

30	SHUTDOWN!
29	
28	Ammo Explosion 8+
27	
26	Shutdown 10+
25	-5 Movement Points
24	+4 Modifier Fire
23	Ammo Explosion 6+
22	Shutdown 8+
21	
20	-4 Movement Points
19	Ammo Explosion
18	Shutdown 6+
17	+3 Modifier to Fire
16	
15	-3 Movement Points
14	Shutdown 4+
13	+2 Modifier to Fire
12	
11	-2 Movement Points
10	
09	-1 Modifier to Fire
08	
07	
06	
05	-1 Movement Points
04	
03	
02	
01	
00	

TOTAL HEAT SINKS



Left Arm

- Shoulder
 - Upper Arm Actuator
 - Lower Arm Actuator
 - Hand Actuator
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
- 1-3
- Heat Sink
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
- 4-6

Left Torso

- Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - L.P. Laser
 - L.P. Laser
 - Jump Jet
- 1-3
- Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
- 4-6

Left Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

CRITICAL HIT TABLE

Head

- Life Support
- Sensors
- Cockpit
- Roll Again
- Sensors
- Life Support

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

- Endo Steel Structure

Center Torso

- Engine
 - Engine
 - Engine
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
- Gyro
 - Engine
 - Engine
 - Engine
 - Jump Jet
 - Jump Jet

Engine Hits ○○○○
Gyro Hits ○○
Sensor Hits ○○

Right Arm

- Shoulder
 - Upper Arm Actuator
 - Lower Arm Actuator
 - Hand Actuator
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
- 1-3
- Heat Sink
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
- 4-6

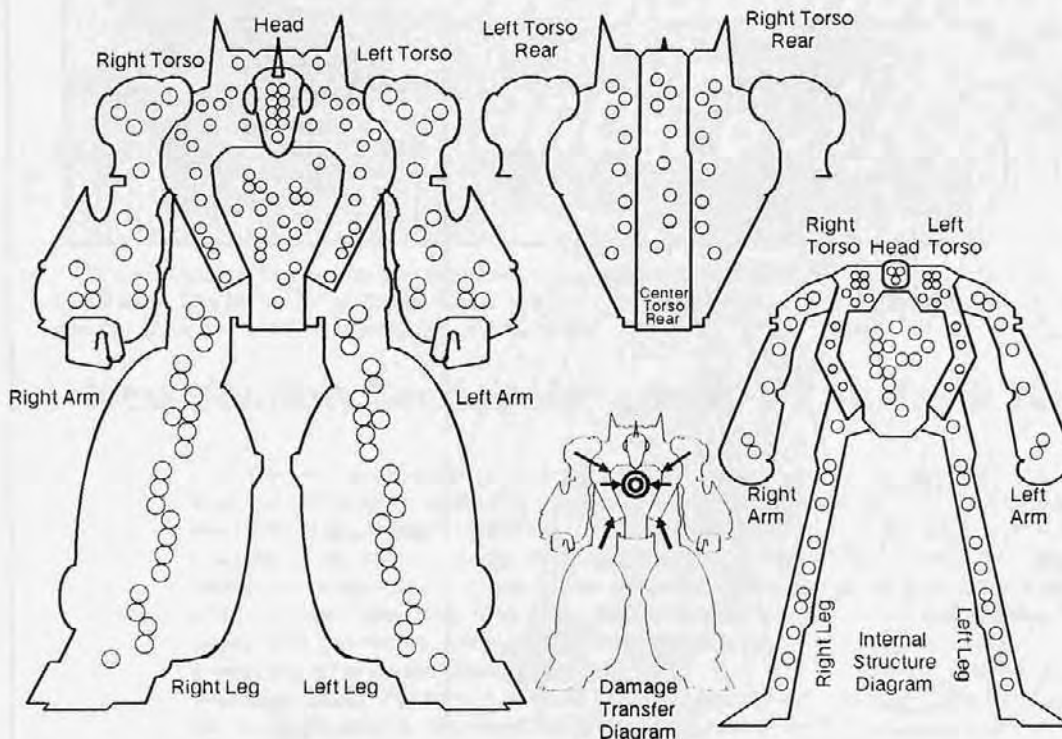
Right Torso

- Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - L.P. Laser
 - L.P. Laser
 - C-3 Computer
- 1-3
- C-3 Computer
 - C-3 Computer
 - C-3 Computer
 - C-3 Computer
 - Jump Jet
 - Roll Again
- 4-6

Right Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

INNER SPHERE 3050



MECH DATA

Type: PLR-6A Pulsar
 Tonnage: 45
 Movement Points:
 Walking: 5
 Running: 8
 Jumping: 5

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

#	Loc	Type	Ht	Dam	Mm	St	Mm	Lq
1	LA	L.P. Laser	10	9		3	7	10
1	CT	L.P. Laser	10	9		3	7	10
1	H	C-3 Slave	0					

WARRIOR DATA

Name: _____
 Gunnery Skill: _____ Piloting Skill: _____
 Hits Taken: (Consciousness Number)
 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th
 (3) (5) (7) (10) (11) (Dead) KILLS

Left Arm

- Shoulder
 - Upper Arm Actuator
 - Lower Arm Actuator
 - Hand Actuator
 - L.P. Laser
 - L.P. Laser
- 1-3
- Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
- 4-6
- Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again

CRITICAL HIT TABLE

Head

- Life Support
- Sensors
- Cockpit
- C-3 Slave
- Sensors
- Life Support

Right Arm

- Shoulder
 - Upper Arm Actuator
 - Lower Arm Actuator
 - Hand Actuator
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
- 1-3
- Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
- 4-6
- Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

- Ferro Fibrous Armor
- Endo Steel Structure

Left Torso

- Jump Jet
 - Jump Jet
 - Jump Jet
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
- 1-3
- Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
- 4-6
- Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again

Center Torso

- Engine
 - Engine
 - Engine
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
 - Gyro
- Gyro
 - Engine
 - Engine
 - Engine
 - L.P. Laser
 - L.P. Laser

Right Torso

- Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Heat Sink
 - Jump Jet
 - Jump Jet
 - Roll Again
- 1-3
- Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again
- 4-6
- Roll Again
 - Roll Again
 - Roll Again

Left Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

Right Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

Engine Hits ○○○○
 Gyro Hits ○○
 Sensor Hits ○○

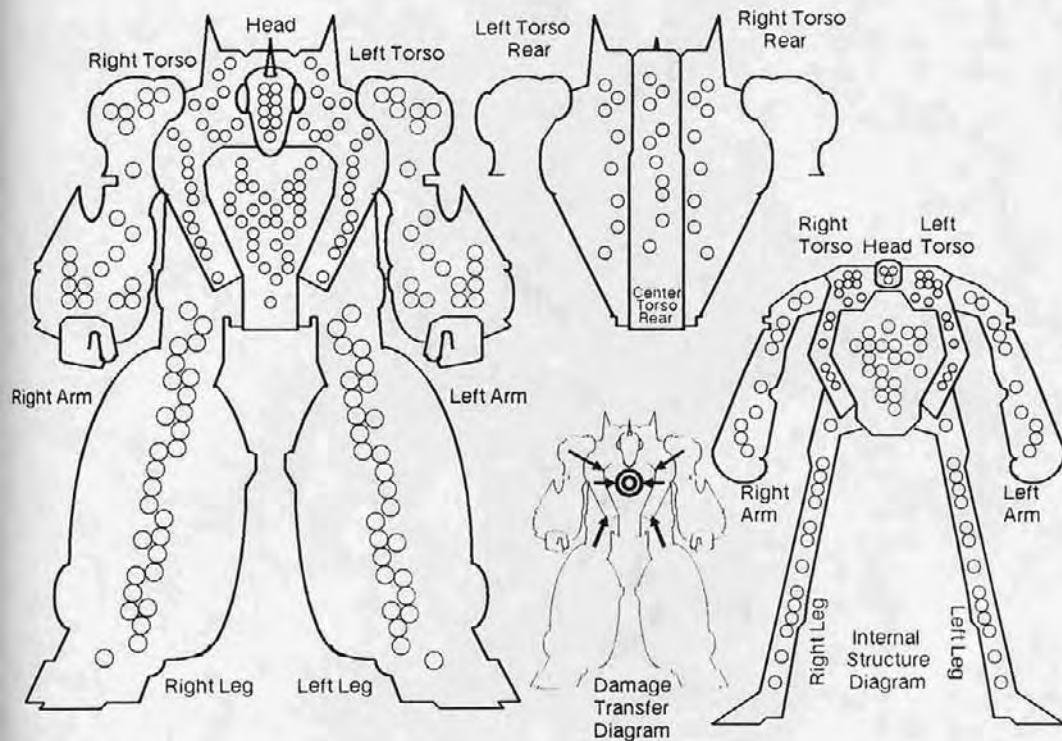
HEAT SCALE

30	SHUTDOWN!
29	
28	Ammo Explosion 8+
27	
26	Shutdown 10+
25	-5 Movement Points
24	+4 Modifier Fire
23	Ammo Explosion 6+
22	Shutdown 8+
21	
20	-4 Movement Points
19	Ammo Explosion
18	Shutdown 6+
17	+3 Modifier to Fire
16	
15	-3 Movement Points
14	Shutdown 4+
13	+2 Modifier to Fire
12	
11	
10	-2 Movement Points
09	
08	-1 Modifier to Fire
07	
06	
05	-1 Movement Points
04	
03	
02	
01	
00	

TOTAL HEAT SINKS

○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

INNER SPHERE 3050



MECH DATA

Type: RGR-7A Ranger

Tonnage: 60

Movement Points:

Walking: 5

Running: 8(10)

Jumping: 5

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

#	Loc	Type	Ht	Dam	Mm	St	Mm	Lg	
1	CT	Small Laser	1	3			1	2	3
1	RT	L.P. Laser	10	9			3	7	10
1	H	C-3 Slave	0						
1	LA	Axe		12					

WARRIOR DATA

Name: _____

Gunnery Skill: _____ Piloting Skill: _____

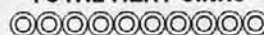
Hits Taken: (Consciousness Number)

1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th
(3) (5) (7) (10) (11)(Dead) KILLS

HEAT SCALE

30	SHUTDOWN!
29	
28	Ammo Explosion 8+
27	
26	Shutdown 10+
25	-5 Movement Points
24	+4 Modifier Fire
23	Ammo Explosion 6+
22	Shutdown 8+
21	
20	-4 Movement Points
19	Ammo Explosion
18	Shutdown 6+
17	+3 Modifier to Fire
16	
15	-3 Movement Points
14	Shutdown 4+
13	+2 Modifier to Fire
12	
11	
10	-2 Movement Points
09	
08	-1 Modifier to Fire
07	
06	
05	-1 Movement Points
04	
03	
02	
01	
00	

TOTAL HEAT SINKS



Left Arm

- Shoulder
- Upper Arm Actuator
- Lower Arm Actuator
- Hand Actuator

1-3

- Axe
- Axe

4-6

- Axe
- Axe
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

Left Torso

- Jump Jet
- Jump Jet
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

1-3

4-6

- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

Left Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

CRITICAL HIT TABLE

Head

- Life Support
- Sensors
- Cockpit
- C-3 Slave
- Sensors
- Life Support

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

- Ferro Fibrous Armor
- Endo Steel Structure
- Myomer Accelerator SC

Center Torso

- Engine
- Engine
- Engine
- Gyro
- Gyro
- Gyro
- Gyro
- Engine
- Engine
- Engine
- Small Laser
- Jump Jet

Engine Hits ○○○○
Gyro Hits ○○
Sensor Hits ○○

Right Arm

- Shoulder
- Upper Arm Actuator
- Lower Arm Actuator
- Hand Actuator

1-3

- Roll Again
- Roll Again

4-6

- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

Right Torso

- L.P. Laser
- L.P. Laser
- Jump Jet
- Jump Jet
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

1-3

4-6

- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

Right Leg

- Hip
- Upper Leg Actuator
- Lower Leg Actuator
- Foot Actuator
- Roll Again
- Roll Again

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C-3 Computer RT 1 5 5.00
 Net Free Tons: 0.00
 Net Free Critical Locations Remaining: 7
 'Mech Design O.K.

PLR-6A PULSAR

Technology: Inner Sphere 3050
 Tonnage: 45.00

Internal Structure: Endo Steel 2.25
 Engine: VOX 225

	Walking:	5
	Running:	8
	Jumping:	5
Heat Sinks:	10 Double	0.00
Gyro:	3.00	
Cockpit:	3.00	

Armor Factor:	161 Ferro Fibrous	9.00
	Internal	External
Head	3	9
Center Torso	14	20/8
Left/Right Torso	11	14/8
Left/Right Arm	7	14
Left/Right Leg	11	22

Type	Loc	Qty	Crits	Tons
Heat Sink	RT	1	3	0.00
Jump Jet	LTR	3	1	1.50
Jump Jet	RTR	2	1	1.00
Large pulse laser	LA	1	2	7.00
Large pulse laser	CT	1	2	7.00
C-3 Slave	H	1	1	1.00

Net Free Tons: 0.25
 Net Free Critical Locations Remaining: 6
 'Mech Design O.K.

RGR-7A RANGER

Technology: Inner Sphere 3050
 Tonnage: 60.00

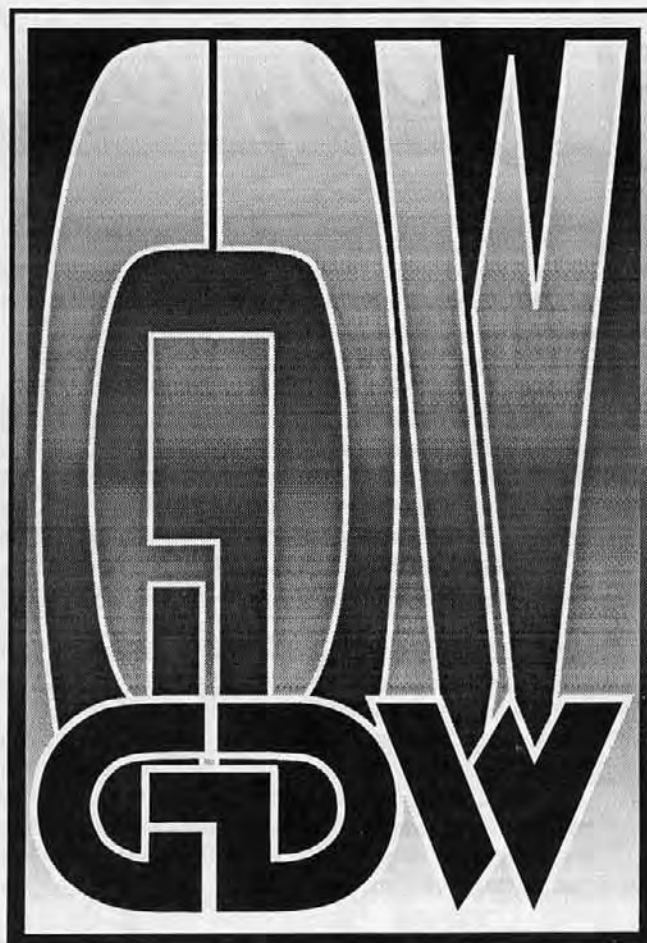
Internal Structure: Endo Steel 3.00
 Engine: Vlar 300

	Walking:	5
	Running:	8 (10)
	Jumping:	5
Heat Sinks:	10 Double	0.00
Gyro:	3.00	
Cockpit:	3.00	

Armor Factor:	206 Ferro Fibrous	11.50
	Internal	External
Head	3	9
Center Torso	20	30/10
Left/Right Torso	14	20/8
Left/Right Arm	10	20
Left/Right Leg	14	28

Type	Loc	Qty	Crits	Tons
Jump Jet	CTR	1	1	1.00
Jump Jet	LTR	2	1	2.00
Jump Jet	RTR	2	1	2.00
Small Laser	CT	1	1	0.50
Large pulse laser	RT	1	2	7.00
C-3 Slave	H	1	1	1.00
Hand Axe	LA	1	4	4.00

Net Free Tons: 0.00
 Net Free Critical Locations Remaining: 3
 'Mech Design O.K. Ω



Transactions

of the
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 Geographical Society**

The Royal Martian Geographical Society wishes to inform the public that its quarterly publication devoted to Victorian Era role-playing is now available on Earth. Each 32-page issue contains:

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A Job For Toulouse

By Chuck Kallenbach II

We are the only guardians left. It is our task to make certain the catastrophes do not happen again. We have sacred trust that must not be betrayed. Our numbers are few and dwindling. There are those who would oppose us. There are those who would make the same mistakes once again. We must fight to defend the Machinatio Vitae, the Machinery of Life. Every day, more of the ancient machines are unearthed. Every day, the clamor for more technology becomes louder. If we do not become one with the planet, we can only be its enemy. These are the philosophies that have enabled us to stay alive and prosper. These beliefs cannot be forgotten.

Excerpt from a speech delivered by Kirgo, representative of the Old Blood Mechanics, at a council meeting of the City in the Sea

Designed for a group of player character troubleshooters, this scenario will be especially helpful for any referees with a surplus of Old Blood Mechanics. As lonesome guardians of the Machinatio Vitae, the Old Bloods are both extremely capable and very important. As capable player characters, there should not be too many of them in the player group. As important character types, the Old Bloods will occasionally find themselves to be the target of someone's anger.

AFTERNOON INTERVIEW

Jack Tenrec, leader of the Old Bloods, is on the warpath. He is angry about recent lack of maintenance on the tribe's vehicles. All the vehicles have been unconditionally grounded until the mechanics give them the once-over. Old Bloods in the PC group are anxious to escape from Tenrec's baleful glare, so they are thrilled to be notified of a meeting with Governor Toulouse late that same afternoon.

The characters won't have any time to find out more about the meeting with Toulouse, but if they aren't familiar with his description supplied on page 124 of the game rules, this would be a good time.

In the council chambers, governor Toulouse looks tired and haggard, even this early in the afternoon. Without getting up, he rudely gestures to the seats available in his sparsely furnished office. "I am sure you are all aware of the vital work being done on our outlying experimental farms. It is imperative that their research into new farming techniques be allowed to develop so that the City in the Sea can continue to thrive and expand."

"We have received word from the Patterson family, living in the farms to the north of the city. They are complaining about a gang of poachers active in their area. The poachers have already caused slither stampedes and destroyed acres of farmland."

"Your assignment is to find these poachers and apprehend them—alive, if possible. We would like to find out more about how they are arming themselves. The Patterson farm is about 60 kilometers to the north, and there would be a good place to start. My clerk can handle any requests for special equipment you may have."

Toulouse's clerk (an attractive young lady named Zena) will require signing the usual papers for any equipment the characters need. If the request is reasonable, and the equipment is returned in good order, they may be able to keep it in lieu of payment. The forms are the same ones the players have seen before, but they are printed on bright yellow paper with rows of little holes down the side. This

paper is being used due to a recent shortage, and was discovered by the Moles four days ago. No one can figure out what it was used for. (Yes, it is tractor-feed computer paper.)

JOURNEY NORTH

Refer to the City in the Sea Adventure Map on page 126 of the game rules. The journey will be as follows: 20 kilometers west (through the hex with Jack's garage), 10 kilometers northwest, and 50 kilometers north (zig-zag through the hexgrid) to the last prairie hex before the forest. The farms are located on the forest edge, trying to level some ground to create more farmland.

Having been denied the use of their vehicles, the characters will journey either on foot or horseback. This means they will make 20 kilometers per period, or two hexes through the prairie. Unless the characters really want to hustle, the trip should take two days (and don't forget the Fatigue rules if they try to hurry).

While traversing the last hex of prairie before they get to the farms, the party will encounter some wild dogs at 1000 meters. The dogs will scatter over the horizon to the north if fired at. If the characters continue to investigate (and this is in the direction they must go anyway), they will find a rotting Mack corpse. A pack of wild dogs is tearing at it. Though there are three dozen of the dogs, if they get wind of the PCs or are fired at, they will quickly run away.

If the corpse is examined, the characters will find it skinned, with its internal glands removed—sure signs of poacher activity. A few misshapen bullet fragments will be found in the animal's armored head—these are about .30 caliber. The corpse is no more than four days old.

Have all the characters make an Average: Intelligence roll. The one who rolls the best finds a crumpled piece of paper in the grass. The paper is obviously from the city (within the last few days) because it is yellow with little holes on both sides. It has a handwritten message: "There should be two of them. Good hunting!" (Adjust the number to reflect the correct amount of Old Bloods in the party.)

Anyone who thinks to check for footprints may make an Easy: Tracking roll to find the poachers' trail. In fact, the poachers are taking great pains to make their trail obvious.

POINT MAN OBSERVATION RULES

The rules for encounters properly penalize an observing group for having a large number of characters. However, there is no provision for the use of a "point man" some distance in front of the party. This pathfinder's job is to scout ahead and report back to the group if any danger is discovered. The point man must be far enough from the group that animals or other quarry are not frightened away, but close enough that a hand signal or quick return trip is not too difficult.

A player operating as a point man must be at a distance from the party equal to the minimum encounter distance for the terrain they are moving through. This is found on the Encounter Range Chart on page 138 (use the modifier times 1). This point man may make Observation rolls without penalty of additional members in the party.

This rule places a lot of pressure on the player running the point man character. This character should have lots of Observation (obviously), Stealth and Intelligence. The player should be able to think quickly and be prepared to handle unusual situations. The referee should take the point player aside to reveal the encounter and discern his reactions first. Of course, the skilled ambusher lets the point man through and waits for the main body to pass by.



MISTAKEN IDENTITY

The party moves northward toward the farms. The trail is absurdly easy to follow. Anyone with an Outstanding Success on an Easy: Tracking roll may note that this is being done on purpose.

Have the players make a Difficult: Observation roll to spot a stationary, camouflaged target. Fourteenaged boys are hiding in the tall prairie grass waiting along the poachers' trail.

The farm boys are armed with .30-30 rifles and are Novice NPCs. They will open fire too early at 400 meters because they are hot-headed and inexperienced. The boys have taken off without their parents' permission to solve the poacher problem themselves. They will be convinced that the player characters are the poachers. To convince them otherwise will be Difficult: Persuasion or Difficult: Leadership.

These misguided vigilantes are not really much of a threat, and if the characters are smart, they will be able to handle the encounter without killing them. The characters should at least patch up the wounded ones when they convince the boys who they really are. Two of the boys are Harlan and Will Patterson, Joe Patterson's sons, and the other two are Jan and Earl Walker.

PATTERSON FARM

Eventually the tall, rolling prairie grass will give way to cultivated fields and fencerows. When the party reaches the Patterson farm, Joe Patterson will greet them with a wary eye and pump shotgun. He is a man used to living off the land. His face is tanned and lined with toil, and he walks like a man who has done physical labor every day of his life.

If the PCs are bringing the farm boys with them, Joe will scold his sons (if they are still alive). "What did you think you were doing? Running off half-cocked and all full of fire! We told you the governor would send somebody to handle it."

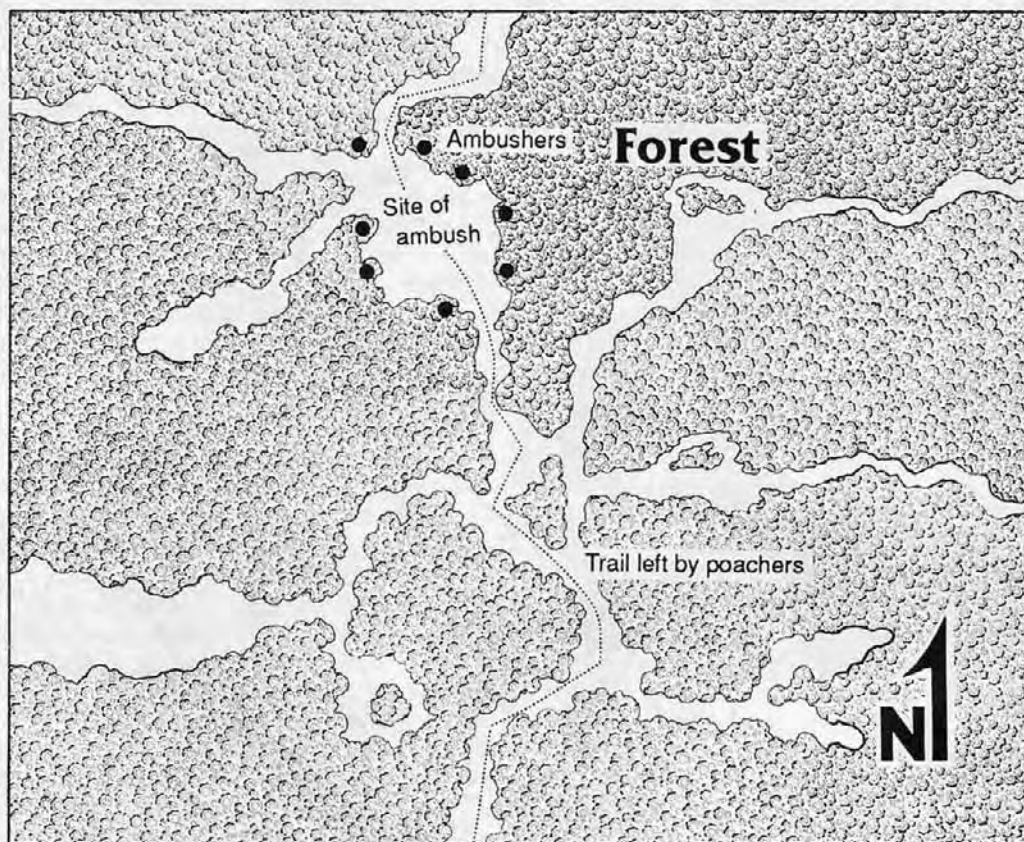
Joe Patterson is relieved to see someone from the city who has come to help with his problems. "The Walkers, from the farm to the east, found the Mack corpse four days ago. There have been some skinned Shilliwaks as well. The Walker farm was nearly ruined by a Sambuk stampede that was started by gunfire in the woods."

Mrs. Patterson will be angry with her sons also, unless they come back dead. She will then be racked with grief and crying uncontrollably. In either case, she is not happy to see anyone from the city and will not be very hospitable. The PCs can

sleep in the barn if it is late in the day. The poacher trail leads north into the forest. "Any fool could follow them," Joe says. "Even a city fool," adds his wife.

INTO THE BREACH

Following the obvious trail the poachers have left, the characters proceed into the forest. The Forest Map features a path through the



forest clearings at eight meters per square. As the poachers are stationary and camouflaged, a Difficult: Observation check must be made to detect them.

The purpose of this first firefight is to soften up, wound and disorient the ambushers. Unfortunately, the poachers do not have descriptions of Old Bloods, so they begin to kill them all. If this first encounter begins to go badly for the ambushers, they will retreat to their hidden outpost (Clearing Map). Roll 1D6 at the end of each turn. If the die roll exceeds the number of surviving ambushers (defined as those not dead or seriously wounded), they will run.

There are nine poachers altogether, counting their leader, Willis "Crusher" Wilson. Two of the poachers are Veterans (Initiative 4 and Small Arms 5) with Parker Hales (complete with telescopic sights), and six of them are Experienced (Initiative 3 and Small Arms 4) and armed with .30-30 rifles. All of the rifles are fully loaded, and 3D10 of the extra rounds are carried by each. Crusher will not be at the initial ambush site; he is waiting in the shack.

ASSAULT

The poachers will fall back to an abandoned shack built of two-inch wooden planks (armor value 1) by some explorers from the city decades ago. The shack is only six by eight meters and is depicted on the Clearing Map (at scale of two meters to the square). The characters enter from the south via the only real path into the clearing.

If they want to move through the forest around the clearing, let them move at half speed through the underbrush. Basically, the poachers will be making a last stand in the shack itself.

Use the same morale rules on the poachers in this firefight, but give them a -2 to the die roll as long as Crusher is still alive (he has a way of motivating people).

The player characters should not have too much trouble with this attack (a PC with high Initiative can circle around back of the shack and attack from there). If they do, have the poachers break morale and run out the back, only to find an angry Saber-tooth.

FINISHING THE JOB

Surviving poachers can be Interrogated (Average) and, on an Outstanding Success, will divulge the connection with Scharnhorst. Not all the poachers know about this (Wilson does, of course).

Any captured poacher who can be brought back alive will be of special value to the council, particularly Wilson. The weapons, ammo and gold that belonged to the poachers may or may not be reported to the council. These can become booty to unscrupulous characters. None of the poachers have any of the slither glands or skin, being amateur poachers at best.

For reward, give the PCs as a group \$5000 for Crusher, and \$1000 for each poacher brought back alive. If any of the farmers were killed in the case of mistaken identity, deduct \$1000 each. Remember to award 2 Initiative experience points to all characters who participated in both combats. If any characters signed out for equipment at the beginning of the adventure, and they didn't screw up totally and brought the gear back intact, perhaps they could be allowed to keep it.

At the council hall, Toulouse will debrief the party upon their return, and if they killed any of the young farm boys, he will be very angry with them. "You should have known better than to fire on helpless young men," he scolds. Luckily for the PCs, Governor Dahlgren is within earshot and steps in to defend them. "They were only fighting in self-defense, Toulouse. It was clearly a tragic case of misunderstanding."

It will be a Difficult: Persuasion task to get the council members to investigate Wilhelmina Scharnhorst. She did not write the incriminating note, and any testimony from the poacher will be discounted. Although her antipathy toward Old Bloods and the Machinatio Vitae is well known, she is a powerful citizen. Any accusations will fail miserably, serving only to illustrate the tremendous amount of clout

that she has with the council and other forces in the city. Player characters pressing this issue will find that they are succeeding only in making a powerful enemy.

KIRGO, MECHANIC

Kirgo is Jack Tenrec's chief mechanic. He is one of the oldest of the Old Bloods, and he is knowledgeable in the history of the tribe. He knows the role the Mechanics played in the shelters built by the Ancients. Due to Tenrec's constant wanderings, Kirgo is often left in charge of the garage. A gifted speaker, he has the testimony before the council on the importance of the Machinatio Vitae.

Motivation: Wise, honorable.

Attributes: Strength 7, Agility 5, Constitution 3, Charisma 7, Intelligence 9, Education 4.

Skills: Small Arms 2, Gunsmith 4, Lockpick 2, Stealth 3, Driving 5, Scrounging 4, Navigation 2, Tracking 3, Mechanic 10, Leadership 4, Persuasion 3, Machinist 2.

(See *Xenozoic Tales* 9 and 10 for more about Kirgo.)

WILLIS "CRUSHER" WILSON

Wilson is not much more than a common criminal except for his large size and considerable cruel streak. After pummeling his way to the top of an underworld gang in the City in the Sea, he was noticed by Wilhelmina Scharnhorst, the ruthless scientist. He rules his gang with fear and intimidation, killing all who challenge him with his guns or his bare hands. Wilson is a mountain who will never surrender and will fight to the death (don't forget that a critically wounded character can regain consciousness; see page 71). PCs who have generic contacts of Criminal may know Crusher.

Motivation: Brutal, enjoys inflicting pain on others.

Attributes: Strength 10, Agility 7, Constitution 5, Charisma 5, Intelligence 3, Education 2, Initiative 5, Unarmed Combat Damage 7.

Skills: Melee Combat (Unarmed) 7, Small Arms (Rifle) 8, Thrown Weapon 4, Scrounging 3, Lockpick 4, Stealth 6, Interrogate 4.

Possessions: 100 gold dollars, a .44 Magnum revolver and a semiautomatic shotgun with deer slugs.

Background: Scharnhorst began supplying Wilson with weapons stolen from the Vaults by the Moles. She has decided that it is time to thin the ranks of the Old Blood Mechanics, fools that stand in the way of her path toward technology and rulership of the tribe. Scharnhorst has paid Wilson and his cronies to kill a slither, leave an obvious trail, set up ambush and kill any Old Bloods in the troubleshooter party. Her spies watching the council should be able to determine how many mechanics will be sent, even if she can't get descriptions.

OXPECKERS

Scientific Name: Archaeopteryx Xenozoic

Description: An aerial scavenger, perhaps the only feathered creature in the Xenozoic. Encountered in large flocks, the Oxpecker can become a predator. The animal has earned its name by bringing down an occasional lone beast of burden with biting and clawing attacks.

Size: Small

Habitat: Ubiquitous

Number Appearing: 3D6

Attack: 5

Combat Move: 24/50

Hits: 8

Weapons: Teeth and claws

Base Hit Number: 5

Damage: 2

Strength: 2

Constitution: 1

Meat: 6

Initiative: 5 Ω



Paranormal Animals of Europe

FASA. \$18.00.

Written By Carl Sargent (with additional writing by Tom Dowd and Mike Colton).

Softbound, 167-page, roleplaying game supplement.

Published in 1993.

Review by Christopher E. Wolf

Paranormal Animals of Europe is FASA's second sourcebook cataloging the critters and beasts inhabiting the *Shadowrun* universe (the first dealt with the North American awakened animals).

Paranormal Animals of Europe is divided into several sections: Awakened Animals, Faerie Critters, Metahuman Expressions, Powers of the Awakened, Worldwide Distributions and the Critter Table.

The Awakened Animals section is the major bulk of the book. In alphabetical order, it describes diverse critters, from the Abrams Lobster to the Wyrd Mantis. The listings for the individual critters are broken into several parts, including a drawing of the animal, how to identify it, whether it has magic capability, its habits, a brief commentary, and its powers and weaknesses (if any). The listings also include a section called Shadowtalk, where people who have actually encountered the creatures (or so they would have you believe) give their opinions. Last, a section called Game Information lists the statistics of the critters in game terms.

The first appendix is on the various Faerie critters of Europe, with a brief essay on the nature of awakening and special Faerie creatures. The appendix is rounded out by listing a few examples of Faerie critters, such as

Domovoi and the Wild Hunt.

The second appendix is an overview of European metahuman expressions. It describes the Ogre and Minotaur metahuman types and how to use them in a campaign.

The last section of the book is game information. In this section is a compiled listing of all the powers of awakened critters from all the various sourcebooks, including the *Paranormal Animals of North America* and the *Shadowrun* 2nd edition rules.

Another useful part of this section is the worldwide distributions of critters from all of the sourcebooks. It includes sections on how to transplant critters from one habitat to another, parallel awakening, population spread and species engineering.

The last, and probably the most used, section of this book is the Critter Table, statistics for every awakened critter in the six worlds that has been cataloged to date.

EVALUATION

Overall, I highly recommend the book for both gamemasters and players. Gamemasters will find the critters useful in adding a breath of freshness to their games, and players might learn to keep their runners alive long enough to avoid encounters with the critters in the future.

The artwork is top-notch, as usual. The color plates are fantastic and add to the book's overall realism quite well. There are more than double the amount of color illustrations than in the North American book. The black-and-white renderings are as good as the drawings in the North American guide as well.

The critter information is in the same format as the North American guide and is informative as well as amusing in the bantering that goes on in the shadowtalk section. The gamemastering section is a must-have for referees if they want quick access on any critter on a moment's notice. I like the fact that the critter information is at the end of the book instead of in the front like in the North American guide.

The \$18.00 price tag makes this book more expensive than the North American guide, but the wealth of information is more than worth it.

The only complaint I have with the book is that some of the critters, while being interesting, don't provide much of a challenge for players to defeat. On the other hand, some beasts (like the Wraith) have virtually no weaknesses and are almost impossible to kill.

Even if you have no plans for running a campaign set in Europe, I still recommend this product for your *Shadowrun* game.



Chromebook 2

R. Talsorian Games. \$12.00.

Written by Wright, Roter, Hexter, Pregent, Sheeley, MacDonald, Winn, Pondsmith, Tipton and Todd.

112-page style guide for *Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0*.

Published in 1992.

Review by Paul Lucas.

Hey, wireheads, life in an ultra-violent, post-modern dystopia getting you down? Punch in your deck and download *Chromebook 2* for the latest in what's lethal, practical or just plain cool.

Can never find a light for your smoke? Get the Lighter option for your Dynalar Cyberfinger. Always losing your grip? A custom Cytech Cyber Hand with two thumbs is for you. Want to keep an eye on someone? Buy Cyphire's detachable Remote Cyber Eye.

Ladies, do you have trouble keeping groping hands away? Try SecSystem's electrostatic Protection Field. Tired of getting arun in your hose? Get Fashiondrome's Armored Stockings. Can't get that sleaziod punker to quit calling you? Arasaka's Assassin Remote will take care of the problem real quick!

Perhaps weapons are more to your liking. *Chromebook 2* has more firepower than you can shake a nuke at. Punknights bumming you out? Take them down single-handed with either the Rhinemetall EMG-85 Railgun, the Tsunami Ramjet Rifle, or the Militech "Anti-Matter" Rifle (which "you can use to knock the frackin' Starship *Enterprise* outa orbit," says the Axeman of the latter). Other perks in the arms section include the nonlethal Pursuit Webgun, the anticyber Techtronica Pulse Rifle, the easily concealed Imi Chainknife.

For the total chromebrain, Full Body

Replacement is the ultimate expression of everything cyberpunk. Throw away your out-of-date meat body and replace it completely with the latest in cutting-edge cyberware. Won't your friends be impressed with your new eight-foot, heavily armored Dragoon Body Conversion with its full assortment of weapons options? Free cyberpsychosis therapy with every conversion!

For those who like their personal biology but hunger for the unusual, exotic biosculpting is available. Purrr like a kitten with your new Katnix exotic package; be your own mermaid with an Aquaform biosculpt; or become the man you've always dreamed of being with the Superman modifications. And just think of the nights you and your significant other can experience with the Playbeing package. Guaranteed to increase your sensuality exponentially!

Vehicles, professional teams, computer hardware, holographic equipment, exotic ammunition, and even the latest in sound systems are covered. Whatever you want—metal, meat or silicon—is available in *Chromebook 2*.

EVALUATION

Chromebook 2 is one of the best equipment catalogs ever put out for an RPG, possibly outdone only by its predecessor, *Chromebook*. It is a handsome, well-organized and very visual work. The devices are thoughtful and inventive, and there are many things that referees of game systems other than *Cyberpunk 2.0 2.0* can apply to their campaigns. *Chromebook 2* is highly recommended to everyone who can get their hands on it.

Technical Readout 3055

FASA. \$15.00.

168-page book of 'Mech and Aerospace fighter designs for BattleTech. Published in 1992.

Review by Craig Sheeley.

Since the first technical readout years ago, FASA has produced more and more of these supplements for the *BattleTech* system as a sort of "Jane's" guide to the newest and most-often encountered equipment on the futuristic battlefield. Each readout contains information on the equipment's manufacture, tactical purpose, who deploys it, and how well it's done in combat so far, plus the game mechanic information on how to use it on the battlefield.

This book includes many new designs used by the Clans of Kerensky, front-line and secondary 'Mech units

and aerospace fighters. This information can be of great use to *BattleTech* referees wishing to throw new enemies at their players, and Clan players can find a wealth of new designs to modify. (What *BattleTech* player ever uses the standard design? As soon as it can be afforded, every 'Mech is heavily customized.) The Clan modifications to standard Inner Sphere 'Mechs are quite good; the Warhammer 'Mech is now more fearsome than the Awesome.

The designs are usually amalgamations of game technology put together without much individuality. Gone are the days when a 'Mech's characteristic silhouette holds a specific perimeter for combat. Only a few of the new 'Mechs have designs that make them stand out from the herd; when they do, they are usually well worth the trouble of wading through the mediocre designs. The Watchman, Stealth, Rakasha, War Dog, and many of the Assault models are noteworthy. Most of the Clan 'Mechs are excellent as well.

The artwork is slightly better than past readouts. As a rule, if a design isn't based off of something out of Japanese animation, the physical appearance and the accompanying artwork are terrible. This readout differs in that it includes more slick color plates, and the best ones are, as usual, comic-book pose variations on anime machines.

BattleTech players, beware. In typical fashion, new technology has bought immense upgrades in performance—one of the new medium 'Mechs could handily destroy an old-model Warhammer and walk away from the conflict without appreciable damage. Armor, firepower and mobility have been enhanced by expensive new tech. If it ain't got Endo-Steel frame, XL power, ER weapons and ferro-fibrous armor, baby, it ain't worth havin'.

This concentration on more and more expensive machines points out a central flaw—the idea that war is to be fought with walking battlemachines, essentially the least efficient method of carrying weapons and armor! This ignores the fact that the economics of warfare are based on money and wealth, just like real life. Conventional forces cost a great deal less than 'Mechs, but transport through space is expensive, so they made less-than-efficient invaders. However, their low costs and maintenance requirements make them the perfect defense forces, more than capable of blowing 'Mech invaders back into space. That's what happens when half the cost buys twice the tonnage in tanks! Unlike all the other technical readouts, this latest one includes not one conventional unit.

Overall, if you're trying to keep up with the latest installment of the shifting *BattleTech* universe, this book is useful. If you're unhappy with lack of conventional units, then this book is really unnecessary.

Medium Omnimechs

Ral Partha. \$18.00.

Sculpted by Jeff Wilhelm. Painted by David Hoppock.

Boxed set of four lead 'Mech figures for the *BattleTech* game of futuristic battlemachine combat.

Manufactured in 1992.

Review by Craig Sheeley.

Completing the Ral Partha selection of Omnimechs, this boxed set of mediums is probably going to be the most useful set of 'Mechs available, since mediums are the norm in *BattleTech*. (The first three packs in the Omnimech line were reviewed in *Challenge 64*.) This set contains detailed models of the Dragonfly, Fenris, Blackhawk and Ryoken. The larger pieces are packed separately, while the smaller pieces are attached to the molded sprues and must be separated from the sprues for assembly. One piece and a length of piano wire (for aerials) are packed in a resealable plastic bag.

These 'Mechs have sharp, clean detail that just begs for some detailed painting. The poses are good, actually somewhat better than those in the original drawings. The assembly diagrams do a good job of showing you what pieces go where. The pieces go together fairly well; a little Superglue gel applied after assembly can cover the larger-fitting cracks. Don't cover them too well, though; those cracks represent the 'Mechs' joints.

I must make special mention to painter David Hoppock, who did a wizard job on the 'Mechs pictured on the back. This time, a blue sky background allows the full glory of the paint jobs to be seen. And the pictures are life-sized, which makes the paint jobs even more impressive; those checkerboards are microscopic.

The only complaint I can muster is that there is an inordinate amount of molding flash bits, from the overflow holes in the molds. While this is very normal for some other companies, it is not for Ral Partha. And some of the sprues are a bit robust for the pieces attached to them; cutting the pieces off will be a delicate operation.

Are these 'Mechs worth getting? They are mediums, the single most useful weight of 'Mech; they are molded well and look good; the price isn't too bad. Therefore, they are worth buying. Ω

Being in the main a topical tidbit tumbling trippingly from my typewriter, trying to truthfully treat torrents of treatises on the topic of Traveller: The New Era, (tra la)

and not, sadly,

Piles and piles of money, free for the taking!!

Volume 1, Number 4

Just in case you thought we were making this stuff up, I would like to herald the return of:

REAL LETTERS FROM REAL PEOPLE. This makes three issues in a row, so I would like to step right out on a limb, and proclaim that this is the beginning of a trend. (This is relatively easy for me to say because I happen to know that I have at least one other piece of mail addressed to me that will extend this streak out to an unprecedented four issues in a row. Speaking of streaks, anyone here a Cubs fan?)

Anyway, all of you Traveller trendsetters out there who would like to keep the Bwanaship on course and on an even keel can please mail your Bwanagrams to:

Commodore Bwana, GDW, P.O. Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646

or fax your message direct to the GDW Old Naval Pensioners Home at (309) 454-3127. Feel free to include any questions you might have, because although fame and fortune surely await those chosen by the gods to appear in this August Column, if you don't have a question for me to answer, I'll just sit here in silence, fumbling with my paper clips, wondering what to do until someone comes along, shuts off my office light, and tells me to go home. And that makes for some pretty dull reading.

And now, without further ado, Round Three of REAL LETTERS FROM REAL PEOPLE, THE EUROPEAN EDITION:

Dear Commander,

(This, of course, proves that he is familiar with other, younger, members of my family, and does not in any way imply that I don't exist—Ed.)

Congratulations on a fine work in TNE. It looks to be a fine addition to my library.

(Darn right. You can say that again.)

Congratulations on a fine work in TNE. It looks to be a fine addition to my library.

(This, of course, is blatant—no, criminal—misuse, of the editorial prerogative. HA!! Such laws apply to lesser editors who have not felt the sting of the salt spray but who have felt the sting of legal action.)

I have a few questions along the TNE tangent:

1. It's good to have nuclear X-ray detonation missiles back, but what about HE types for lesser tech levels? I think that the RCES would use these more than nukes (cheaper and easier to produce, plus atomics would be at a premium).

2. Various references to "longbow" have been made. Just what does it refer to? (I think it is psi-commo over long ranges, though I may be wrong.)

3. I noticed that the SL configuration of many ships and small craft prohibit them from entering atmospheres above thin. Is this a typo, or have we been doing it wrong all along?

I anxiously await the new materials coming out and any help you might give.

J. Norton, Augsburg, FRG

P.S. Congrats on clearing the virus from the Travellers' News Service.

Well, J (can I call you J?), thank you for the vote of confidence, especially about that whole sad Virus episode. Cleaning up th%í¿.-jan be harfIÖ . . . J*®@fibXork, as you can well imagi:Ä!Ngmø <QrÖã%EÖÄ(zR6xfI:~p)ä-
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Interestingly, we even had some Internet people apologize to us recently for doubting the realism of the Virus plot device in TNE, as apparently they got their plots devised quite nicely over on Internet recently. And people wonder why we old steam-powered Victorians are in no hurry to get our space all cybered.

1. Because of the great distances involved (30,000 km per hex or range band), nuclear detonation-pumped lasers are really the only worthwhile payload for space missiles, but if you have seen *Fire, Fusion, & Steel* (the TNE technical architecture handbook), you will notice that it has an entire chapter on designing missiles with all manner of non-nuclear warheads and guidance packages. The RC uses such missiles extensively, for battlefield support and orbital planetary strike (don't say planetary bombardment in front of the RC, it makes them all twitchy), and a number of these are presented in detail in the upcoming *Reformation Coalition Equipment Guide* (Reformation Coalition Manual #3), as well as rules expansions for missile design and operation.

2. References to "Longbow" have been limited to *Survival Margin*, and have not yet surfaced in TNE material proper, although I expect that they eventually will. Unfortunately, I am not at liberty to discuss the Longbow issue, but I will say that you are not wrong.

3. This is not a typo, but the the explanation of the effects of hull streamlining was incomplete, as it did not go on to mention the benefits of installing contra-gravity drives. The passage that you have read was from the first printing of *Brilliant Lances* and is correct as written for all ships which do not have contra-gravity installed. However, streamlined ships which have contra-gravity installed may freely take off from and land on worlds with atmospheres.

The sentence has been amended in the second printing of *Brilliant Lances*, and now reads as follows:

In general, airframe hulls may enter any planetary atmosphere to land on the surface or skim fuel; streamlined hulls may skim gas giants but may not land on planetary surfaces with atmospheres of greater than Thin (if contra-grav is installed, they may freely land on any world); and unstreamlined hulls may do neither.

Geez, is that the time?

All ashore that's going ashore, away the gangplank, and all that. Drive gently, obey all posted speed limits, and for goodness sake, don't pass people in cruise control. It's discourteous to overtake slow traffic at 1/10 of 1% of a mile per hour, it slows down traffic, and it cheeses people off. This is Commodore Bwana aboard the starship *Roxy Music*, signing off.



Challenge 73

Rate each article from 0 to 5. 0 means you did not read the article. 1 indicates great dissatisfaction, and 5 indicates great satisfaction. 2, 3 and 4 are shades in between. To use a separate sheet, list each article number, then your rating (be sure to indicate the issue number). Send responses to:

Challenge Feedback
Managing Editor
PO Box 1646
Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA.

- +						
0	1	2	3	4	5	Article
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FREE Drawing!

Send us your feedback, and you will automatically be entered in our drawing for a FREE one-year subscription to **Challenge**, the magazine of science-fiction gaming.

Name _____
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Congratulations to James W. Rommell of Copiague, NY, who won a free one-year subscription to Challenge for sending in his feedback on issue 69.

Feedback Results for Challenge 69

Avery's Raiders (Twilight: 2000)	2.5
Point Man (Twilight)	1.9
Passing of the Flame (MegaTraveller)	3.8
Good, Bad and Vilani (MegaTraveller)	3.9
Special Insert—Virus (TNE)	3.9
Road Work (Dark Conspiracy)	2.0
Who's on First (Shadowrun)	2.3
Tigr Happy (Cyberpunk)	2.0
Repo Men (2300 AD)	2.5
Aurora (Paranoia)	1.1
Melas (Space: 1889)	2.4
Weapons (BattleTech)	1.8
Opinion	3.2
Traveller News Service	3.8
Conventions	1.7
The Big Screen	1.8
Reviews	2.8
Classifieds	2.6
This issue's cover art	3.7
This issue's interior art	3.4
This issue as a whole	3.5

We look forward to receiving your feedback for this issue.

GDW Product Distribution

GDW products (including Traveller) are available through distributors as follows:

- Australia: Imported and distributed by *Jedko Games*, 134 Cochranes Rd., Moorabbin, Vic, 3198, Australia.
- Denmark: *Falmer Spiele*, Ermelundsvej 92D, DK-2820 Gentofte, Denmark.
- Finland: Imported and distributed by *Fantasiapeli Tudeer KY*, P Rastitie 6 B 22, 01360 Vantaa, Finland. Some titles are translated into Finnish.
- France: *Ludis International*, 32 Rue Louis Plans 31500 Toulouse.
- Greece: *Ludis Company*, Samis 18,111 42 Athens.
- Holland: *American Discount Books*, Kalverstraat 186012, XC Amsterdam.
- Iceland: *Godson Myth*, P.O. Box 5085, 125 Reykjavik.
- Japan: Printed and Distributed by *Post Hobby Japan Co., Ltd.*, 26-5, 5-chrome Sendagaya, Shibuyaku, Tokyo, Japan. Titles published are translated into Japanese.
- The Netherlands: *999 Games*, Rondeel 134, 1082 MH Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- New Zealand: *Unicom Distribution*, 5A Lome St., Auckland, Central.
- Spain: Imported and Distributed by *Central De Jocs*, C/Numancia 112-116 Bajos, Barcelona 08029. Some titles are translated into Spanish.
- Sweden: Imported by *Target Games*, Frihamnen S-100 56, Stockholm, Sweden, and 101 Productions, Box 19008, S-400 12 Gothenburg.
- United Kingdom: Imported and distributed by *Chris Harvey Games*, PO Box 38, Bath Street, Walsall, WS1 3BY, UK; *Hobby Games Ltd.*, Unit T3, Rudford Industrial Estate, Ford Airfield, NR Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 0BD, UK.
- Germany: Imported and distributed by *Fantasy Productions*, Konkordiastr. 61, Postfach: 3026, 4000 Düsseldorf 1, Germany and Welt der Spiele GmbH, Alt Griesheim 72, 6230 Frankfurt, A.M. 80, Germany. Some titles are translated into German. Ω

feedback

Gaming-related classified ads are free and run for at least one issue, longer as space permits. **Challenge** reserves the right to edit or refuse any ad. **Challenge** will not be held liable for errors occurring in ads. **Challenge** will not accept any ad which solicits the unauthorized copying of copyrighted material, either GDW's or anyone else's. All ads must be typed. Send ads to **Challenge Classifieds**, Managing Editor, PO Box 1646, Bloomington, IL 61702-1646 USA. For display ads, write for our free rate card.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

ON DECEMBER 7, 1993, a lone gunman killed 6 and wounded 20 people on a Long Island commuter train. One of the wounded was 26-year-old Kevin McCarthy, a long-time gamer with the New York Tech. gaming group. His father, Dennis, was killed in the shooting. Kevin was shot in the head and as of Dec. 17 he remains paralyzed in the left side of his body. A fund has been set up to help him and his family meet the ever-mounting medical expenses, and the NY Tech gaming club (home of the New York Mechs and the Klingon flagship I.K.V. *Smurfslayer*) ask for your assistance. Please send any donations to the Kevin McCarthy Fund, 493 Nancy Road, Mineola, NY 11501. Let's pull together for one of our own! (72)

PLAYERS WANTED

LOOKING IN MD. Mature, female gamer looking for gaming group or gamers interested in forming a group. Hero System, *Shadowrun*, *Vampire/Werewolf*, *Call of Cthulhu*, *Warhammer* preferred, but very flexible, with large gaming collection. Interested parties please contact Carolyn Cason, 931 Clopper Road, #B4, Gaithersburg, MD 20878. (73)

CUMBERNAULD ROLEPLAYING FEDERATION, Cumbernauld's roleplaying club (near Glasgow) welcomes new members who want to participate in the activities of a serious RPG and wargames club. We play all games including *Call of Cthulhu*, *Cyberpunk*, *Space: 1889*, *WFRP*, *AD&D*, *Warhammer 40K*, *DBA*, and many original in-house systems. Contact us at 241B Greenrigg Road, South Carbrin, Cumbernauld, Scotland, G67 2QD. (73)

SATURDAY EVENING Traveller gaming group in Seattle (Northgate area) seeks beginner to intermediate-level players. The campaign is based in the Spinward Marches, circa 1100 (using vintage and custom Traveller adventures). Roger Sanger, PO Box 75472, Seattle, WA 98125. (73)

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY—Alternate Realities Club is looking to network with other university and college science fiction/fantasy/RPG organizations. We are a new organization on our campus and would also like the help of a gaming community and industry. Contact Seton Hall University, Alternate Realities Club, Student Center, 400 South Orange Ave., South Orange, NJ 07079. (73)

SOUTHERN INTRIGUE III Play-By-Mail. Characters take on the roles of barons in a fictional medieval setting, simulating the economic, military, court, and personal aspects of life and conflict. This complex, open-ended prototype game is open to a limited number of players. And it's the least expensive play-by-mail around: \$5 set-up, + \$1/turn and postage. Send a SASE

for more information or \$5 for Part 1 of the rules to Steve Chisnell, S13, 2171 E. 14 Mile #108, Sterling Heights, MI, 48310. (73)

HELPI I AM A GAMER in dire need of a game. I have played *AD&D*, *BattleTech*, *Call of Cthulhu*, and *Dangerous Journeys*. I am interested in playing any RPG that you are willing to teach me. Contact me soon! Ed Nycz, 37 N. 15th St. #2, Allentown, PA 18102. (73)

PLAYERS AND GMS wanted in the Grafton area for *Shadowrun*, *AD&D* (both editions), *Twilight: 2000* (both editions), *Merc: 2000*, *Robotech*, *BattleTech*, *Tales of the Floating Vagabond* and many more. Contact Andrew Bird, 2B Knotts Close, Grafton NSW, 2460, Australia. (73)

ATTENTION BRADFORD GAMERS! The City of Bradford Roleplayers Guild is a club for gamers of all ages. We play anything and everything (even the odd wargame), and meet on Saturdays, Sundays, and Monday evenings. For more information, contact Guy Milner, 70 Station Road, Burley-in-Wharfedale, Ilkley, West Yorkshire, England LS29 7NG. (73)

LOOKING FOR *BattleTech* and *Traveller* players in the Karns area. Can referee or play. Extensive *BattleTech* and *Traveller* library and game aids. Contact Gary Miller, 8911 Emory Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-1614. (72)

GAMER IN EXILE looking for players in southern West Virginia. Any RPG system welcome. Also need people interested in a PBM SF RPG I'm running. Contact W. C. Bargo, 1505 Temple St., Hinton, WV 25951-2035. (72)

BATTLETECHPLAYERS: The AFMG recruiting address has changed, but we are still around. If you are interested in a top-quality PBM, write to AFMG Recruiting, c/o Jim Domarad, 1039 W. Emerald, Mesa, AZ 85210-3410. (72)

SEARCHING FOR a gaming group in academia at Texas Tech University/Lubbock area interested in *Star Wars*, *Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0*, *Shadowrun* and much more. Contact C. E. Williamson, 613 Coleman-TTU, Lubbock, TX 79406. (72)

PLAYERS AND GMS in south eastern Indiana and Cincinnati, OH wanted for a *Dangerous Journeys* campaign. Contact Gary Duty, PO Box 254, Metamora, IN 47030. (72)

FOR SALE

EXTENSIVE GAME COLLECTION must go! *Traveller*, *Civil War*, *WWII-III*, *AD&D*, sci-fi magazines. Mint items, collectors' items. For list, write to Andrew Pierce, 5645 SW 80th St, Apt. C, Miami, FL 33143. (73)

VINTAGE TRAVELLER MATERIALS: *Books 1-6*, *Supplements 1-8*, *11*, *Adventures 1-5*, *11*, *Double Adventures* (all 6), *Alien Realms*, *JTAS 4-7*, *9-12*, *15-17*, *19, 24*, most *Challenge* issues, *MegaTraveller Journal 2*. Roger Sanger, PO Box 75472, Seattle, WA 98125. (73)

AD&D, *FORGOTTEN REALMS*, *Greyhawk*, *Ravenloft*, and *Spelljammer* gaming material for sale. Also, DC/TSR comic books, TSR 1991 & 1992 trading cards, *Star Trek* trading cards, *Polyhedron*, *Dungeon*, *White Dwarf*, and *Dragon* magazines. Send SASE to Kevin Quashie, 2 Lamont Ct., Sicklerville, NJ 08081-1904. (73)

TRAVELLER PRODUCTS, some hard-to-find. Send large SASE for list. Leroy Gualney, 2750 S. Ingalls Way, Denver, CO 80227. (73)

FREE COMPUTER-DRAFTED adventures for *Traveller: The New Era*. Play and evaluate my work. Send name and address plus 10 stamps for postage and handling to W.T. Hinzman, 7100751-B16, Clallam Bay Corrections Center, HC-63 Box 5000, Clallam Bay, WA 98326. (73)

GAMES AND GAMING SUPPLEMENTS for sale. Some titles no longer in print but still collected. For list of available titles, send SASE to Yamil Gonzalez, 636 Beach 69th St., Arverne, NY 11692. (73)

VOYAGES SF: SEVEN BACK ISSUES remaining of this now out-of-print semi-pro gaming 'zine. Get 'em all now for \$7, plus \$2 for S&H. Send to StarLance Publications, 50 Basin Drive, Basin City, WA 99343. (73)

LOST INTEREST—Selling large collection of RPGs, boardgames, magazines and miniatures. For a list, send a SASE to Patrick Morgan, 3905 Northern Lights Drive, Pocatello, ID 83201-5934. (72)

FANATIC'S GUIDE to *Collecting Traveller*. Includes a comprehensive list of products made for *Traveller/MegaTraveller/New Era*, plus a bibliography of related articles appearing in magazines. Contact Roger Sanger, PO Box 75472, Seattle, WA 98125. (72)

TRAVELLER, 2300 and *MegaTraveller* rules and supplements. For a list, send a SASE to David Meeks, 1407 W. Princeton, Ontario, Canada 91762. (72)

AMAZING BARGAINS on out-of-print *Traveller* and related SF game items. Send SASE for list to Charles Kimball, 3019 N. Casselwood St., Winter Park, FL 32792-1716. (72)

SOURCEBOOKS AND SUPPLEMENTS for many games, including *Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0*, *IO*, *Shadowrun* (and *DMZ*), *Dark Conspiracy*, *2300 AD*, *MegaTraveller*, *Twilight: 2000* and others. For a complete list, write to Ross Mackenzie, Dunlin Close, Kingswinford, West Midlands, United Kingdom DY6 8XP. (72)

OUT-OF-PRINT *Traveller* products. Send a SASE to Roger Sanger, 1021 NE 123rd, Seattle, WA 98125. (72)

TSR Gold Card sets for sale, complete with rares. Over 10,000 cards for trade. Send want and need list to JM Kittrell, 2915 LBJ 161, Dallas, TX 75234. (72)

IBM COMPUTER PROGRAMS for *Traveller*, *AD&D*, *BattleTech* and other game systems. Several shareware programs per disk. Send a SASE for complete list to Mike Hensley, 3303 Mission Bay 194, Orlando, FL 32817. (72)

2300 AD PLAYERS and IBM PC owners: Is navigation and all the computations needed a hassle? If so, you need this StarMap program. Trade routes, shortest travel distances, all stars within a specified distance of a given star! Contact Magician's Query, J. Link, 3247 Montreal St., Bismarck, ND 58501. (72)

COMPLETE PRODUCT LINES: *Traveller*, *MegaTraveller*, *2300 AD*, *Vampire*, *Rolemaster*, *Spacemaster*, *Cyberspace*, *Silent Death/Metal Express* (all miniatures, all blister packs), *Space Opera*, *Middle-Earth*, *Champions*, *Chill*, *Jorune*. Plus various *Challenge*

magazines, *BattleTech* (1st Battledroids edition also), *Dark Conspiracy*, *DC Heroes*, miniatures, Japanimation (and related material). Send \$1 for list to Ray Woy, 5396 28th Ave. N., St. Pete., FL 33710. (71+)

TRADE

MODERN DAY RPG adventures and sourcebooks, particularly for *Daredevils* and *007*. I'll pay reasonable prices for originals. Also looking for any data on Chinese myth and folklore, particularly religious Taoism as seen in the films of Sammo Hung. Tom B., 2500 E. 109th St., 2nd floor, Chicago, IL 60617. (71)

WANTED

DGP'S ALIEN MODULE: *Solomani & Aslan*, Campaign Module: *The Flaming Eye*. Both must be in good to mint condition. Will pay \$\$\$ or trade for old *Traveller* I have. Send large SASE. Leroy Guatney, 2750 S. Ingalls Way, Denver, CO 80227. (73)

METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA: Original or complete copy. Please send terms to Carolyn Cason, 931 Clopper Road, #B4, Gaithersburg, MD 20878. (73)

BARD GAMES: *CYCLOPEDIA TALISANTA*; *FASA* (*Star Trek*): *Conflict of Interest*, *Old Soldiers Never Die*, *Return to Axanar*, *White Flame*; Hero Games: *Justice Inc.*; *Pacesetter*; *TimeMaster RPG*, *Assassin Queen*, *Timetricks*; *Skyrealms: Companion of Jorune*, *Burdoth*, *Earth-Tec Jorune*. Please send info to Darrell Baran, 477 Melbourne Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R2K 1B3. (73)

TWILIGHT: 2000 1ST EDITION PIRATES of the Vistia, *Black Madonna*, *RDF Sourcebook*, *Armies of the Night*, *US Army Vehicle Guide*, and the *Survivors' Guide to East Europe*. Also AD&D 1st edition Fiend Folio and *Monster Manual 11*. Contact Andrew Bird, 2B Knotts Close, Grafton NSW, 2460, Australia. (73)

FROM GDW: JTAS 1, BOOK 8, Supplements 10 and 12, *Alien Modules* (K'ree, Droyne, Zhodani), *Adventure 8*, *Atlas of the Imperium*, *Striker*, *The Traveller Adventure*, the *Spinward Marches Campaign*, and *Game 1-5*. From DGP: *101 Robots*, *Early Adventures*, *Traveller's Digest 1-5*, 8, 13, *Grand Survey*. Roger Sanger, PO Box 75472, Seattle, WA 98125. (73)

I'M LOOKING FOR ISSUES of the following fanzines: *AAB Proceedings*, *The Adjutant*, *Between Worlds*, *Continuum*, *Coreward*, *The Fanzine Reader*, *Imperium Staple*, *Jumpspace*, *Melbourne Times*, *North Coast Role Playing*, *PARSEC*, *Security Leak*, *Signal-GK*, *Spinward Times*, *T-Tech*, *Third Imperium*, *Tiffany Star*, *Variant*, *Voyages*. Willing to purchase or trade. Roger Sanger, PO Box 75472, Seattle, WA 98125. (73)

HELP! HAVE GONE STIR CRAZY IN PRISON: Looking for any kind-hearted individuals who'd be willing to donate any *Space: 1889*, *BattleTech*, *Renegade Legion*, *Star Fleet Battles*, and *Space Marine* games, books, modules, and mags. Also looking for anybody wanting to correspond with an individual locked up. Send reply to Richard Steinberg, #69458,

Arizona State Prison—Eymann/SMU, PO Box 4000, Florence, AZ 85232. (73)

GURPS FANTASY FOLK BOOK, Chaosium's *Masks of Nyarlathotep*, and any Chaosium *Call of Cthulhu* stuff or any related books or materials. I would like to sell *GURPS High Tech* (first edition). Also interested in trading gaming supplements. Please write to Linda or Kelly, 83 West Parr Blvd., Reno, NV 89503. (73)

ANY INFORMATION, blueprints and background material from the Transformers toy line made by Hasbro. Need data on Cybertron homeworld as well. Material will be compensated for. Transformers SFRPG in design preparation. Contact Universe Products, POB 10142, Pittsburgh, PA 15232-0142. (72)

TRAVELLER'S AIDE SOCIETY *Journal 1* and early Traveller items. Will trade or purchase. Gary Miller, 8911 Emory Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-1614. (72)

BATTLETECH supplements *Rolling Thunder*, *Kell Hounds*, *Gray Death Legion* and *Sorensens Sabres*. Can trade *Rifts* or *Marvel*, or pay full price plus a finder's fee. Also want any magazines or fanzines with *BattleTech* material. Contact Joey Cohen, 7452 N. Washtenaw, Chicago, IL 60645. (72)

SOLO GAME BOOKS: Every genre wanted. *Sorcery!* 1-4 and *Spellbook*, *Middle-Earth Quest: Mines of Moria*, *TSR Catacombs: Knights of the Living Dead*, *Car Wars 3-6*, *Fighting Fantasy 4-41*, *Heroes Challenge 1-4*, *Combat Command*, *Sniper!*, *Marvel Superheroes 1-8*, *Grailquest*, *Freeway Warrior 1-4*, *Crossroads*, *AD&D 1-18*, etc. (not *Lone Wolf* or *Grey Star*). Also solo RPG scenarios, *TFT*. E. Jackman, 1815 Butler Ave. 120, Los Angeles, CA 90025. (72)

ATTENTION CLUBS: We are compiling a national directory of gaming and SF clubs, and we want to include your organization. Listings in the directory are free. Write for a survey form to Unconventional Graphics, 841 Worcester Road, Suite 207, Worcester, MA 01760. (72)

LOOKING FOR JTAS volumes and older Traveller game materials and miniatures. Also *Renegade Legion/Centurion* miniatures. Contact Gary Miller, 8911 Emory Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-1614. (72)

TRAVELLER SUPPLEMENTS. GDW: *Secret of the Ancients*, JTAS 15, 16, 18-24, *Alien Modules 2, 4, 5*. DGP: *Starship Operator's Manual*, *101 Robots*, *Travellers' Digest 5-21*, *MegaTraveller Journal 1-2*, *Flaming Eye*. Photocopies are fine. Please Contact J. A. Holden, 1221 E. Charleston Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85022. (72)

SEEKING ANY PROFESSIONAL or personal work, article, background, etc., dealing with *Star Trek's* Klingons. No fascism, fetishism, but political and social reflection. I also play 2300 AD, *MegaTraveller* and *Space: 1889*. I'm seeking any materials about these RPGs. Write to Eric Morel, 5 Place Du Commerce, 14123 Cormelles-Le-Royal, France. (70)

FANZINES

THE GAMER'S CONNECTION™ is a bi-monthly small press publication for RPG fans. Features include articles, gaming tips, NPCs, con info, upcoming releases, product reviews and more!

We have readers from coast to coast and as far as Australia and Israel! The best submission each issue wins a prize (up to \$30 value). TGC is just \$15 for one year (6 issues), or \$2 for a sample copy (check/MO payable to MTA Graphics). PO Box 278331, Sacramento, CA 95827. (73)

DUNGEONIER DIGEST: A ROLE-PLAYING MAGAZINE. We cover AD&D as well as other fantasy game systems. We need artists as well as articles, and we pay cash. Please contact Star Quest Games, RR #1, PO Box 81, Flat Rock, IL 62427-9735. Request a sample issue for only \$2. (73)

CAMELOT '94: A newsletter devoted to role-playing in any shape and any form. Each issue is 20 pages long and includes rules variants, adventures, and fiction for your favorite games. Submissions and questions should be sent with a SASE to Philip J. Reed Jr., 319 W. Grand, Perryville, MO 63775. (73)

ALLIANCE ADDRESS: This new *Star Wars* gaming newsletter has adventures, campaign settings for the second edition, new character templates, dossiers, game updates and reviews, and more. Send a legal-sized SASE to Planitia Publications, POB 10142, Pittsburgh, PA 15232-0142. (72)

SILVER GRIFFIN: A magazine for enthusiastic gamers. Contact *Silver Griffin*, PO Box 1751, St. Paul, MN 55101. (72)

THE TRAVELLER CHRONICLE: A new magazine covering all aspects of Traveller, from original to New Era. Published quarterly. Contact Sword of the Knight Publications, 2820 Sunset Lane 116, Henderson, KY 42420. (72)

BEAUMAINS: The Arthurian magazine for gamers. *Pendragon* scenarios, historical and literary background and discussions, etc. Published 3-4 times per year. Submissions welcome, especially artwork. The first three issues now available from Gareth Jones, 69 Atherley Road, Shirley, Southampton, England SO1 5DT. (72)

GAMERS FORUM was a part newsletter. It still covers a wide range of games. Send your request for a free copy. We are open for articles and art submissions. Write to David P. Kulner, 800 Emory St., Apt. B, Imperial Beach, CA 91932. (71)

FGMP-16, a quarterly newsletter dedicated to Traveller miniatures rules, equipment, battles and campaigns. Features terrain-building techniques, new battle tanks and Aslan mercenary battalions. Every issue will contain a new vehicle or two, and 15mm starship deck plans. The exploits of Kelly's Highlanders, a tank mercenary battalion, will also be covered. Contact Mike Kelly, 10710 Evergreen Way, C-308, Everett, Washington 98204. (71)

DARK TIMES, a quarterly newsletter dedicated to *Dark Conspiracy*, features new proto-dimensions, equipment, adventures and DarkTek. The Dark Lords and evil minions will also be covered in detail. Each issue will have a complete adventure ready for play. Contact Mike Kelly, 10710 Evergreen Way, C-308, Everett, Washington 98204. (71)

CYBERPUNK GAMING FANZINE: Features adventures, source material, fiction, etc. Covers most cyberpunk game systems. Submissions welcome. Send a SASE to BIOSCAN, 833 N. San Juan, Stockton, CA 95203. (70)

Traveller: The New Era

ZEPELINS OF ZUMLI

Nobody ever said that life in the Wilds was going to be simple. *By Paul Brunette*

Merc: 2000

DAMSEL

Only someone above the law can ensure the safety of a young girl kidnapped by a merciless crime lord. *By Michael Todd*

PRIVATE CHARTER

When a job sounds too good to be true, it usually is. *By Allen Ray Garbee*

Dark Conspiracy

GLOBULES

Horror emerges from the strangest and most unexpected places these days. Who would ever have suspected that a nightmare could ooze forth from a small Maine town? But it did. Who knows what goes on in other, similiar areas? Perhaps a nightmare waiting to happen lies next door to us all. *By Michael C. LaBossiere*

Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0.

MARTIAL ARTS

Rules on martial arts combat, additional martial arts techniques and styles, plus an exciting adventure. *By Robert K. Wood*

Shadowrun 2nd edition

THE DEEP BLUE SEIZE

Despite the 2025 ban on whaling, someone is still running a whaling ship, and they must be stopped. *By David Perry*

SPY ARCHETYPE

"For some things you need violence. For others, subtlety. That's where I come in. I've been a street-ganger, a jet-set hanger-on, a personal secretary and a plain old-fashioned con-man, whatever the job required. You want someone to get in close to your enemies, then I'm the one you need. Hey, would I lie to you?" *By David Perry*

Space: 1889

TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES THROUGH MARTIAN SKIES

For weeks now, cloudships had been disappearing. Finally, the culprit was sighted: not Martian or human cloud captain, but a sandwing, a most notable beast from Martian legends, said to be much like Earthly dragons. *By Terry Sophian*

2300 AD

SURVIVAL COURSE

Can the PCs survive a simple training course when a horde of robot assassins attack? *By Paul Lucas*

Star Wars

HOLONET WAYSTATION

Explore the HoloNet, a grand project put forth by the Old Republic. Part 2 of the companion to *Star Wars Galaxy Guide 7: Mos Eisley*. *By Martin Wixted*

Call of Cthulhu

MEMENTO MORI

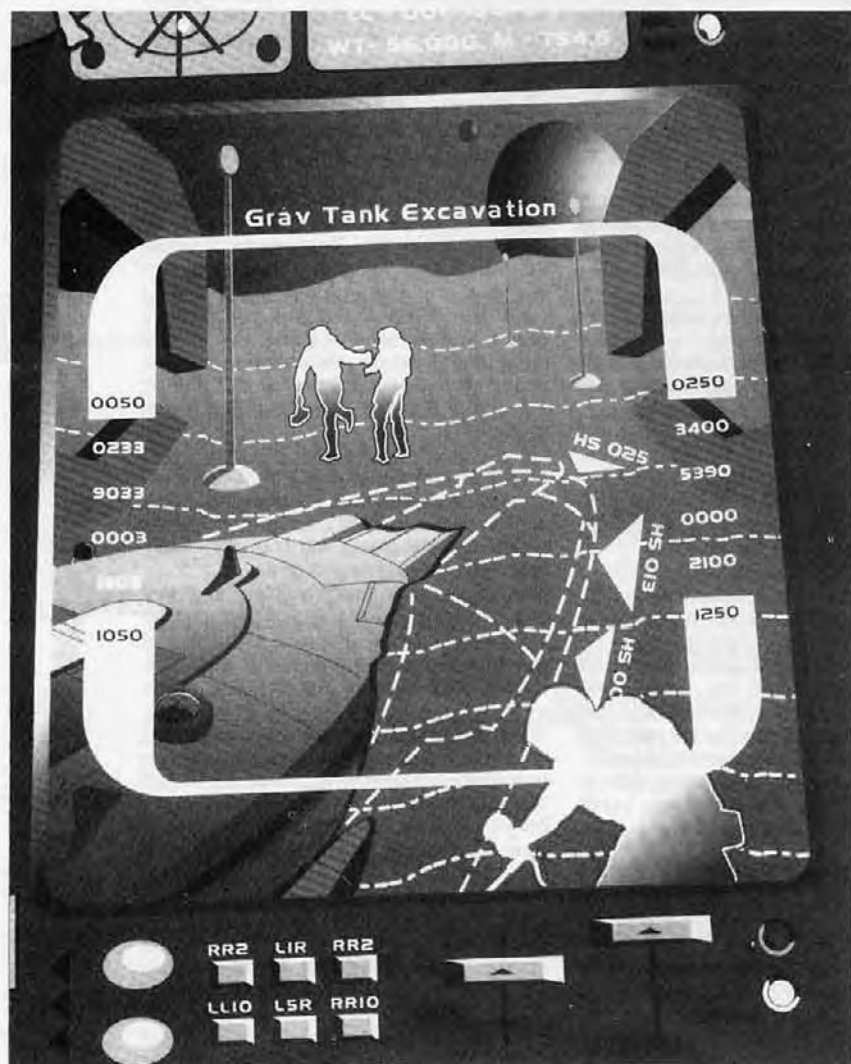
When you think the battle's over, the fight has just begun. *By J. B. Hill*

Reviews

Battle for Armageddon by Games Workshop.
Skyrealms of Jorune third edition by Skyrealms Publishing, Inc. and Chessex Publishing.
The Curse of Khalif by R. Talsorian.
Battle Masters by Milton Bradley.

And More!

Plus Coalition Information Network, Ask Commodore Bwana, Opinion, Conventions, Reviews, Classifieds and much more!



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THE
**STAR
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Reformation
Coalition
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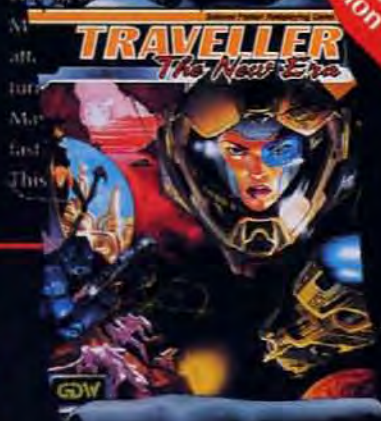


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Smash & Grab, Star Viking Hot Recovery Operations
#0305, \$14.00

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#0310, \$20.00

GAME DESIGNERS' WORKSHOP

